

COBBETT'S MAGAZINE.

No. 9.] OCTOBER, 1833. [Vol. II.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
I. THE MARAUDERS OF MITFORD.....	181
II. THE FACTORY SYSTEM	198
III. TO MY HEART.....	207
IV. THE WRONGS OF MEN OF GENIUS	208
V. THE SNUFF-BOX	218
VI. NATIONAL EDUCATION	225
VII. SEAMAN'S NIGHT SONG	238
VIII. THE LECTURE	240
IX. THE REFORMED MINISTRY AND THE REFORMED PARLIAMENT....	244
X. THE WEIRD SISTERS	251
XI. CRITICAL NOTICES, &c.	253

LONDON:

EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have been compelled to deuide the "*Marauders of Mitford*," though at the expence of injuring an excellent tale. "*Going to the Bar, by a Templar*," must be deferred until next number, as also the "*Theatres of Italy*," "*What my friend knew about Burns*," and several poetical contributions.—Next month we expect to be able to lay before our readers "*The Autobiography of an Attorney's Clerk*."

Communications for the Magazine may be addressed (post-paid) to the Editors, at Mr. Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange.

Advertisements for the Magazine, sent to Mr. Effingham Wilson, on or before the 24th, will be inserted on the following Terms:—One Page, 20s.; Half a Page, 10s.; Eight Lines, 7s.

New Books, &c. sent to the Magazine for Review, should be forwarded as early in the month as possible. Works sent late in the month must, of necessity, either stand over until the following Number, or be placed amongst the Critical Notices.

It is believed that COBBETT'S MAGAZINE affords to Advertisers a medium of disseminating information which other Monthly Works do not. It is known that the Magazine is not circulated exclusively amongst the Clubs, Circulating Libraries, and Reading Societies—but that it has a considerable private circulation.

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No. 9.]

OCTOBER, 1833.

[VOL. II.

THE MARAUDERS OF MITFORD.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE YEAR 1317.

—The rich spoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his success.—CONGREVE.

The night, to me of shrieking, sorrow !
The night, to him that had no morrow !—CAMPBELL.

“THE prisoner we took last week after our sport at Tynemouth Priory, endeavoured, Sir Knight, to escape at sunrise this morning from the lower dungeon ; and while old Bertram baffled his flight as he was about to swim the moat, the nimble-footed caitiff stabbed the veteran to the heart with a knife. But, by my halidome, we were not tardy in giving chase to the foul spiller of the old man’s blood, and we have him, now, safe in a den which he can’t very well leave i’faith, without your worship’s permission. Is his ransom money to be doubled for the murder, or shall he die ?” Such were the narrative told, and the question proposed, by a stout, middle-aged retainer, to the deeply dreaded and well known Sir Gilbert Middleton as he stalked on the battlements of Mitford Castle, one bright and cheerful morning in the month of August in the year 1317.

“Let him swing from the topmost tower, before it be noon,” was Gilbert’s immediate reply to his brave and favourite man-at-arms, Robin of Bambrough. The latter departed to make arrangements for carrying into effect this terse and ferocious mandate ; while the former, much less disconcerted than any judge of our day after passing sentence of death, continued his lofty and solitary walk.

His appearance as he paced saunteringly and thoughtfully to and fro, was certainly of a nature highly picturesque and imposing. He could not be more than five and thirty years of age ; and in stature he was so low, that we question whether he would have been eligible to join the perpendicular Life Guards, that surround the palace of his present Majesty. He could not, we think, be said to exceed by any means the middle height. He was slender, active, and from the muscularity and vigour of his limbs, you would be readily of opinion he was a man whom enemies might fear, and friends rely upon. His

beside Henry and me. You are sad I see, love. Have bad tidings been heard at Mitford?"

"Bad tidings, my love," replied Gilbert to his beloved wife, "nay, by the rood, times were never better, nor fortune's smiles more sunny, than they are now."

"But why that downcast visage then? Methinks you have been planning some new foray on yonder battlements this morning. You told me when you returned from your last and greatest work of violence, the plundering of the Holy House at Tynemouth, you would never draw brand again in the robbery of priest or layman; for, did not Agatha, the crippled old nun, whilst you took her silver crucifix from her neck, curse you with a bitter vengeance, and prophecy that your body should be given to the four winds? Take warning, Gilbert, take warning, and leave me not a widow, and our boy fatherless." And Matilda, so saying, threw her arms round the neck of her lord, as he sat down on the green turf beside her and the child.

"Away with these moping tremours, Tildy," answered Gilbert, and he fondly returned her caress, "I have doffed, you see, both hauberk and helm, to please you on this our Harry's sixth birth-day. I have more *marks*, thank our holy mother, than any Knight or Squire in Northumberland; and so long as a warden can watch yon gate, and I can twang a bow, or wield my own bright axe, they shall never give thy Gilbert, Tildy, to the four winds. The nun you wot of was crazy, blind, and lame withal; and knew no more of futurity, poor dotard, than a rusty gauntlet."

"Who are to be our guests, to-day?" enquired Matilda, willing to change the unwelcome subject she had broached, "my brother Adam, you said was with the King at York; and so was our Reedwater cousin, Philip Twizzell; but Walter Selby, I know, will come with his merry jibes and crauks to drink a flagon with you on a day like the present."

At this instant the conversation of the affectionate couple was impeded by their spoiled son Henry directing his mother's attention to four soldiers, who were erecting on the top of the high tower a kind of gibbet with a long noose; while their armour glittered beautifully in the beams of that sun, which was about to look upon the writhings and death-agonies of the unfortunate prisoner whose escape and recapture furnished matter for the address, with which Robin of Bam-brough opened our tale.

"Oh! Gilbert, Gilbert, are you going to murder an unhappy wretch on the day your only son was born?" cried Matilda, after she had seen the awful preparations. "Surely," she continued as the tears filled her eyes, "some other might have been chosen for the doing of so bloody a deed."

"There is absolute necessity for the hanging of the fiend that will shortly dangle from yonder beam," retorted Gilbert with considerable warmth. "Besides attempting to fly from my power, he slew, yes! the base son of a serf slew, Bertram Heron, a man that was once, Matilda, the best and boldest archer in Northumberland,—a man that first lessoned this arm, your firmest protector, to guide the rein, and brandish steel, and tighten a bow."

"I cannot, however, sit on this sward, and look at such a scene," said Matilda, as she rose from her seat; and her husband following her example, both, together with their child and his hawk, turned their steps towards the castle.

Matilda Middleton was as matchless in her beauty, as in her delicate and feminine sensibility. She had a strong and amiable aversion to the predatory warfare almost constantly waged by her lawless husband; to whom, however, it must be admitted, she was attached by the tenderest and most endearing ties it is possible for the heart of woman to possess. This love for her liege lord caused her on most occasions, to overlook the cruelty which Gilbert too often practised towards others, but which, when his wife was in question, was converted into all that is soothing, bland, and affectionate. She had been united to him at the early age of eighteen, and now that she was on the verge of five-and-twenty, she might be said to be the owner of every qualification of head and heart that leads captive the love of man. Her only boy she loved with even more than a mother's fondness; because he, when his father and the troopers were abroad ravaging their countrymen, served with his playful gestures and childish glee, to while away many of the melancholy and tedious hours, which hung often heavily upon her heart, as she sat in the gloomy halls of Mitford. As she walked by the side of her husband, her left hand held by those of her beloved Henry, she seemed, her eyes being fixed thoughtfully on the ground, to be wrapped in musings of a sad and dejecting nature. A jacket of fine red cloth, fastened down the front with buttons of pearl, and fitting remarkably tight round her body, shewed to great perfection the beautiful proportions of her waist and bosom. The edges in front of this vestment were gracefully trimmed with white miniver. Its sleeves reached down to, and were tied at, the wrist. To her jacket were attached her lower garments, which, although full and flowing, did not occupy the space which in latter times has been assigned to that portion of female dress. Her hair, light and long, was drawn up curiously behind; while a wreath of gold encircled her head, to which valuable ornament was appended a veil of white silk that flowed charmingly down her back. If we add to this detail of the costume of Matilda Middleton, a figure beautifully tall and slender, and a face composed of the most regular features, beaming with innocence and good nature, and owning the hue of the apple blossom, forgetting not, at the same time, her fascinating eyes, that possessed the colour of the hawk's, with the placidity of the dove's, it is clear the Marauder of Mitford Castle had made choice of a very pretty woman.

As Middleton, his wife, and the little boy were about to cross the draw-bridge, which led to the main entrance of the fortress, they heard the quick tramp of approaching horsemen.

"By'r Lady," said Gilbert, "Walter Selby, and a goodly company along with him, are riding at a rare speed, to help us to diminish our haunches, sirloins, and spiced sack."

"Talk not of merry-making and junkettings, Gilbert, when your unhappy prisoner is verging on his death-struggle, without monk to soothe or shrive him," replied Matilda, peevishly, and in tears, while

she pointed with her elevated hand to two men-at-arms, who held the unfortunate sufferer, already mentioned, firmly in their grasp, on the loftiest tower of the castle, as a pitiless companion adjusted the noose with horrible composure round the neck of their victim. At this juncture, too, Walter Selby, the individual whom Middleton expected, accompanied by sixteen followers, well armed and mounted, came full in view. By the time they reached the spot where Gilbert and Matilda stood awaiting them, the destroyer of Bertram Heron, after uttering in his agony many loud and piercing screams, that echoed awfully among the woods that encompassed the battlements of Mitford, became suddenly silent; and his livid corpse swung heavily to and fro in the strong autumn wind.

"May I never take wine-cup in hand again, or stroke the chin of an angry abbess, if I do not think a broad flag fluttering in the breeze would have been a more seemly greeting to my comrades and me, on thy brat's birth-day, than the foul carcase of yonder varlet. Were't needful to dispatch him, it might, I trow, have been privily done by the blow of a halberd, or the slash of a dirk, without shewing him, on the top of the black tower, to every roystering blade that may turn his steps hitherward this morning," said Walter Selby with a merry chuckle, to his brother in thievery, Gilbert Middleton, after he had gracefully saluted Matilda, and touched the back of her playful boy with the blunt end of his lance.

"High crimes, Walter, deserve *high* punishment," answered Middleton, whilst the individual whom he addressed dismounted from a charger admirable alike for the beauty of its skin, its arched and haughty neck, and the symmetry of its limbs. The party remained a short space on the draw-bridge, giving and receiving divers congratulations; and Gilbert, when he had gratified his guest Walter Selby, and his beloved Matilda, by making a promise that the body of the poor wretch who had just suffered, should speedily be cut down, led the way, followed by the rest, to the noble and spacious hall of his castle. As Walter Selby and his associates proceeded thither, we cannot perhaps perform a more acceptable service than briefly notice a few of the many peculiarities in his person and character. In age he was considerably beyond the Marauder of Mitford, having enjoyed the pleasures, and combatted the sorrows, of this singular world, for at least fifty years. His face was of that kind which, if seen once, can never be forgotten. One of his dark eyes was unfortunately somewhat deteriorated by a most humorous squint; and his nose, by reason of its being well thatched with the rosy bubbles of the goblet, was large enough to make the noses of three sober and reputable men. He had lost nearly the whole of his upper teeth, by the ruthless blow of some man of might, a disaster which, besides causing him to speak imperfectly, gave an unpleasant supremacy to his thick, sensual, lower lip, over its unsupported neighbour. His beard and mustachios, grizzled, uncombed, and rough, presented a strong contrast to his purple and pimpled cheeks. His collar-bone having been broken by a fall from his horse, at a time when his intemperance prevented him from preserving a proper equilibrium in his saddle; and surgeons in that day not being plentiful or skilful, his head leaned considerably more to-

wards the left shoulder than, according to nature's rules, in strictness it ought. In stature he was tall and majestic ; while his hauberk of "twisted mail," bright as polished silver by means of frequent friction, enveloped a bosom and back indicative of unusual broadness, and surpassing vigour. His limbs, cast in no puny mould, were armed with large plates of steel ; and a plain conical casque or cap of the same metal, with a gorget constructed in a way to suit his distorted neck, and a pair of burnished gauntlets, formed the principal features of his defensive armour. His *offensive* weapons consisted of a lance, a mace at his saddlebow, a sword, and a small dagger.

This remarkable man in early life had been a mendicant friar in Lancashire ; and even then, though clothed in the garb of sanctity, was addicted to those dishonest propensities, which characterized his more mature years. It is recorded, that on one occasion he made his way into the kitchen of a person of distinction, and there perceived a couple of fat and godly capons roasting at the fire. Seeing no individual in the place, in the fulness of his depravity, he took the fowls from the spit, and hiding them under his gown, fled into the fields with all possible expedition, in order to enjoy a meal on the stolen property, amid seclusion and comfort. Unluckily, however, friar Selby had been observed ; was pursued, it is said, the distance of a mile, and remorselessly bereft of his excellent cheer ; receiving at the same time, from three or four stout peasants, unmeasured abuse and a sound beating. His bad fortune in this, and other similar enterprises, induced Walter Selby to discontinue his life of holiness, or rather, to speak more justly, to lay aside the garb of the friar, and with a morion instead of a cowl, on his head, and a two-edged sword in lieu of a missal, in his grasp, endeavour to return the assaults of those he might attempt to plunder ; his unarmed condition, and love of peace, as a *person of piety*, preventing him unfortunately from joining in battle with any one. Walter, accordingly, secretly, and we may add unregretted, left the county of Lancaster ; and coming into Northumberland, distinguished himself as a depredator, on the borders and elsewhere, and at length, was constituted the lieutenant, if we may be permitted to make use of the term, of that band of which the Marauder of Mitford Castle was the daring chieftain. Middleton discerned in Walter Selby uncommon shrewdness, invincible courage, and a faithful heart. Walter, too, was entrusted by his commander with the government of the Castle of Horton, a fortress of some importance situated on the River Blythe ; and there was seldom indeed, a foray concerted, and carried into execution, without the former of these worthies distinguishing himself in the work of villainy, in a way that might be pronounced to rival the latter. In fine, it was generally considered that if the followers of Gilbert Middleton, should suffer such a disaster as the loss of their leader, Walter Selby most certainly would occupy his place, so well could he wield a faulchion, and so deeply was he beloved by the soldiery, on account of his merry disposition and winning deportment.

After Gilbert, and the rest had entered the Castle, the bridge was drawn up, the portcullis fell, the body of the poor malefactor, if such he could be called, and the gibbet which bore it, disappeared ; while

the quick steps, and busy countenances of the domestics within the walls of Mitford, the hissing of roasted meat, and the clatter of black jacks, and other convivial paraphernalia, afforded ample testimony of the extensive preparations, for mirth and good cheer, that were making, on the birth-day of the Heir of Mitford.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT the hour of one, an oak table of enormous size, was placed in the midst of the spacious banquetting apartment, the floor of which had been strewn in the morning with fresh rushes. Soon afterwards the long dark passages which led from the kitchen to the room set apart for exhilaration and festivity, were most profusely fumigated with the odorous vapours that issued from the well-cooked mutton, and venison, beef, poultry, and fish, borne along by the menials, who sported, poor fellows, as they went, their best "quips and cranks, and wreathed smiles." When the table groaned, as it were, beneath the multiplicity of viands and wine heaped upon it, every living soul in the castle, with the exception of some half dozen warders, that happened to be upon duty, sat down to partake of the joyous and plentiful repast. Such a scene of old English hospitality must have been, assuredly, most refreshing for the eye to dwell upon. These were the times when master and servant could dine contentedly together, when pride was a nonentity, and etiquette a shadow.

At the head of the feast of course, might be seen, with rapture in his eye, and mirth in every gesture, the Marauder of Mitford. On his right sat his beautiful Matilda, having a long robe of dark velvet, lined throughout with white fur, added to the dress we have already described. The boy whose birth-day the feast was meant to commemorate, was stationed on a high stool between his parents; and his mother's left arm might be seen occasionally placed with fondness round his neck, while her other hand supplied him with ample store of the choicest delicacies to be found upon the table. Walter Selby occupied a post at the board of enjoyment on Middleton's left. Walter still retained, though discussing the merits of a good meal, his glittering hauberk; his cuisses, however, his casque, and his gorget, with some other portions of his armour, had been laid aside. The removal of his gorget and helm, enabled the spectator to discern more clearly his naturally wild appearance. His crooked and hirsute neck was left in a state of perfect nudity; and his long, uncombed elflocks, uniting with his beard and mustachios, would have given him indeed, a ferocious and appalling mien, had not happily the rosy smile of the Bacchanal composed a redeeming feature. Next to Selby was seated a tall slim youth of fine regular features, and florid complexion, who acted as squire to the individual, to whom he was so near, and was known among Middleton's Marauders by the name of Hugh Coulson. Scandal said that Walter, though never married, was his father; but some of the old troopers that were at the table, and Hugh himself, well knew to the contrary. He was, in fact, the third child of a gentleman, who some years previous to the date of our tale,

resided in a small castle on the banks of the Northern branch of the Tyne, and who, endeavouring by means of an inconsiderable force he had at his command, to crush the nest of hornets, as he termed the band of which Middleton and Selby were the leaders, was slain in a bloody contest with them, his little fortress seized, and his children—his wife happily was dead—taken into captivity. There were, in all five little ones, the oldest only seven years of age, taken by the depredators; Hugh, two elder brothers, and two sisters younger than himself. Their treatment in the stronghold of their father's murderer's was neither kind nor gentle; and they all, excepting Hugh, died at Horton, the castle protected by Selby. As Hugh increased in age and stature, he won by reason of his comely deportment and obliging disposition, the good will of Selby, who kept him, however, in profound ignorance of his birth and parentage, and of the mode in which he had been deprived of his father and his patrimony. This ignorance, however, it was impossible for Selby long to preserve. Hugh Coulson whilst drinking with some of the soldiery at Horton, a little before we have introduced him to the reader, chanced to be told by one of Selby's men-at arms, whose prudence had been set to sleep through the fatal agency of plentiful potations, that even had his stubborn, but gallant father lived, Hugh would not probably have filled a more honourable station, than that of squire to Walter Selby. This slight hint served to fire the train of curiosity which constantly, now that he had reached manhood, agitated the mind of Hugh respecting his early history. Soon afterwards he actually accompanied Selby to his father's castle, to review the garrison which defended it; there he met with an old woman, formerly his father's vassal, who had dandled Hugh when an infant, in her arms; and from her he learned the story of his birth, the violent death of his parent, and the seizure of his property by the very man whom he now served. From the moment he was master of this information, Hugh underwent a remarkable change. He was still the same insinuating youth in the eyes of Selby, Middleton, and the rest; but his heart no longer beat with the warm wish of being valorous in their cause, he brooded on his wrongs, he was continually concerting schemes, which were tinged deeply and fearfully with the darkness of revenge. His feelings at the banquet, to which we must now return, were not those of hilarity and enjoyment. He jested, it is true, and smiled, like the robbers around him; but his pleasantry was a cloak to his bitter detestation, as the shining skin of the snake conceals the poison beneath, and the golden tints and graceful forms of the summer cloud the thunder which reposes within it.

The remainder of the guests at the table in the banquetting hall of Mitford, were not deserving of particular enumeration. They were the numerous followers of Middleton and Selby, all equally brave, all equally attached to both of these chieftains, and all equally unprincipled.

"By my troth, Dame Middleton," said Walter Selby, after he had taken a hearty draught from a wine-stoup, and the servants had removed the considerably-lessened masses of mutton, &c., from the board, "that boy of yours' will be fit for nothing but a hood and a missal, if you pet and befool him in the way you are doing."

"And if he get within the walls of a priory, he will make a better monk than you," answered Gilbert Middleton with a chuckle, which was heartily echoed not only by Selby, but by every one around, that heard the allusion to the iniquities of Selby's younger days.

"You are right Gilbert," said Matilda with one of her loveliest smiles, "Walter Selby may do wiser than sneer at the holy brotherhood, because he was unfortunately no honour to it."

"I do hate those retrospections," replied Walter Selby, grinning and attacking again the wine, "but granting that when the cowl was on this head, I was troubled with infirmities of a woeful nature," here Walter lisped most painfully by reason of the loss of his upper teeth. "Granting, Dame Middleton, that I could not resist, at times, the temptation to take what was not my own, you will give me, I trow, due praise for the mode in which I have redeemed my peccadilloes as a barefooted friar, by my constancy and courage at the side of your husband, when *he* was robbing in a more extensive and abominable manner."

"Marry, thou art no match, Matilda, in raillery, for Walter Selby when the wine is in his pate," said Middleton, to his wife, with a smile of kindness.

"Aye," responded Matilda with a laugh, and knowing her intimacy and friendship with Selby, permitted her to speak in any way she pleased to him without the possibility of offending him. "Aye, I see it is dangerous to touch that ugly animal the hedge-hog."

"Squire always comes in aid of knight when he is at his utmost need," said Middleton, addressing himself to Hugh Coulson. "Why do you not assist Walter Selby, Hugh, in the hall as well as in the contest with mace and battle-axe?"

"What, said your worship?" responded Hugh Coulson, starting from a reverie, in which he had been musing on matters widely different from those discussed by the individuals near him.

"The lad is in love, by'r lady," lisped Walter Selby with great haste, and preventing Middleton from replying to the question Hugh last put. "In love I say," here Walter's squinting eye sparkled most laughably, "I've caught him of late very often conferring with himself on the blackness of her eye, and her cherry cheeks, and the number of kisses she has given him since last Lammas. I remember once I knew a damsel when I was a trifle older than master Hugh, and she had a vile trick——"

"May the foul fiend roast every limb of thee in the hottest fires, thou black knave, thou son of a witch, thou humped-back, limping, cowardly carle, thou," bellowed a stentorian voice from the lower end of the table where the men-at-arms were seated; putting a stop, of course, to the tale Walter Selby was about to rehearse, concerning the lady "he once knew;" for although Walter cared little with regard to some retrospections, there were others of a nature, by no means unpleasant.

The above volley was followed by the clash of arms, and a general uproar among the private soldiery. Matilda with her boy immediately took the alarm, left the apartment, and sought her own peaceful room; while he, husband and Walter, starting abruptly from their seats, endeavoured in a commanding and severe tone, to allay the

angry ferment which had arisen among their vassals; who, by this time, feeling the effects of the generous liquor, were becoming like most half-inebriated people, somewhat pugnacious and quarrelsome. Order, however, was at length restored; and the black-jack circulated as freely and as peaceably as before.

"In the name of St. Mary of Jesmond, I wish our forays were not so far between as they have been of late," said Walter Selby to Middleton. "I confess, Gilbert, I do hate a life in a castle. You have a wife to please you when you are within these walls, at Horton I have no such jewel; and I care not, therefore, how often I am stirring in the field, breaking heads, and seizing prisoners. Our knaves at the table here, are, believe me, not a whit the better for inaction; indeed, one may say while they are at Mitford they think of nothing, vile dogs, but the wine-stoup and the vension, that is sporting in the thickets close by. Hard drinking never made a good swordsman," and master Selby after uttering these wholesome truths, took such a draught from the flaggon before him, as caused the brightness of the bottom to become somewhat too visible. Opposing drunkenness, he swilled the more himself.

"Matilda only this morning was teasing me to cease marauding altogether; but that I find impossible. I have too long been in the habit of riding at the head of a company of gallant fellows, and victory too long has been my boon companion and goodly gossip. Some precious booty, by the rood, will be lying in our path presently," said Middleton, who, although he had not taken wine so liberally as his friend Walter, was nevertheless, what is generally termed "half seas over."

"If a prize does not lie in our path, we will go and seek one, we will I say—I say," and Walter beat the table violently with his clenched hand; for he was now in a complete state of intoxication.

"We will, Walter," said Middleton, and the men-at-arms guessing the nature and meaning of Selby's last and loud declaration, rose simultaneously, and bellowing, every one of them, "we will," the castle of Mitford rang with their shouts, from the lowest vault, to the summit of the highest tower. After this ebullition rational conversation was nearly extinct. Robin of Bambrough, John Leishman, and a great many more of the "mobile vulgum" rolled under the board of festivity; and snored upon the rushes. Walter Selby leaning forward with his face glowing like a ruby, hidden in his hands, the backs of which rested on the table, he also, was presently in a similar state of forgetfulness. In fact, the only persons in the hall capable of uttering half-a-dozen words with clearness and precision, were Gilbert Middleton and Hugh Coulson, the latter of whom having been engaged in musings of a description totally adverse to conviviality, and having drank, indeed, very little, might be said with justice to be in a perfectly sober condition.

"Methought I heard the neigh of a horse, and the hum of men, without the walls of the castle," said Hugh Coulson after Gilbert and himself had supported, but feebly, a desultory conversation for the space of half an hour. "Listen," replied Gilbert, and they remained silent some minutes, till at length, three lusty blasts from a horn,

blown at the castle gate tingled in their ears, and the very walls which surrounded them seemed to shake.

"Who may this be?" said Middleton as he rose from the table. "What, ho! William of Dinsdale, see that my armour is ready should there be need," and Gilbert, accompanied by Coulson, and as many of the retainers as were awake and capable of walking, sallied forth to the entrance of the castle, in order to discover whether the newcomers were friends or foes. Middleton had scarcely reached the castle-gate before he met Matilda, and her brother Adam Swinburn, who had rode to Mitford direct from the City of York. Philip Twizell, cousin to Adam, and a few armed attendants were with him; for in those days of turbulence and outrage, men of condition seldom moved from one place to another, without as many lances to protect them, as they had the means of obtaining.

"Ha, Adam! you, by my troth, were the last man I should have expected at Mitford to day. Some one told me you were visiting the court of that milksop, our King, in order to have the old dispute with Lord Graystock, compromised without an appeal to sword and buckler. Hope you have been successful," said Middleton to Adam, after an affectionate salutation.

"I shall need the aid of you and your brave fellows after all, Gilbert. They have treated the brother of your wife villainously. Philip Twizell can bear witness to it," answered young Swinburn as he and his associates were ushered into the apartment where Walter Selby was sleeping *upon* the table, and the rest *under* it.

Adam Swinburn was a young man two or three years older than his beautiful sister Matilda Middleton. In the contour of the face they resembled each other much; but Adam's hair was jet black, and his eyes, which were unusually large, approached very nearly to the same colour. Though not exceedingly tall, his haughty stride and commanding gestures, did not, indeed, diminish an atom of the height which nature had given him. In temper and disposition he was precisely what might be conjectured from the proud flash of his eye, and arrogant demeanour. He had none of his sister's mildness and blandness of disposition; his temper, being as hasty, fiery, and choleric as any inhabitant of the southern climes, to which his extremely dark complexion might support the idea that he belonged. He resided in a small fortress conterminous to the Tweed; which he inherited on the demise of his father, and in which his mother, after the death of her husband continued to live. Adam, as well as his mother, had opposed Matilda's marriage with Middleton; for they both considered him a character, by no means worthy of an alliance with their ancient and honourable house. Matilda, however, was obstinate; and although neither her brother nor her mother would approach the castle of Mitford, for some time after the union, a reconciliation at length took place, and Middleton became a favourite. Swinburn it is true, would never join his brother-in-law in any of his illegal and plundering exploits; but, the quarrel in which he had been involved with Lord Graystock, rendering it necessary to assume as warlike an attitude as possible, he was compelled to seek the aid of the ruthless banditti, he had been accustomed to despise.

Philip Twizell, the cousin and companion of Adam Swinburn, was as gentle and feeble as the latter was violent and vigorous. Delicate from early youth, and frequently attacked by painful and lingering disease, he appeared from his weak, attenuated frame, pale, emaciated visage, and lack-lustre eye, to be better fitted for the company of the inmates of the cloister, than for that of robust and mail-clad warriors. His want, however, of corporeal energy, was in some degree compensated by his singular prudence, and cool discriminating sagacity. If he were of little service to his cousin Adam as a soldier, (although, by the way, Adam was indebted to him for having on one occasion saved his life,) he was invaluable as a sage and a shrewd counsellor. He it was who advised Swinburn to take a journey to York, and demanding an audience of King Edward the Second, then residing at that place with his Queen and Court, seek justice at the hands of royalty itself, against the rapacity of Lord Graystock, a powerful Cumberland baron. Adam Swinburn was possessed of an inconsiderable tower situate in the middle marches, a few miles from his own residence, and surrounded with an extensive and rather fertile tract of land. To this property Lord Graystock considered he had an indefeasible right, requested Swinburn to yield up to him the possession, which he sternly refused to do, and the consequence was, that the unscrupulous noble seized the tower by surprise, expelled Swinburn's tenantry from the estate, and appropriated the whole of it to his own use.

After this foul act of aggression, Adam Swinburn with characteristic fury determined with the force he himself could command, and with the assistance of his brother-in-law Gilbert Middleton, to retaliate upon the lawless baron. Philip Twizell, however, foresaw the probability of his cousin losing the whole of his property instead of a part, if he took up arms against so potent a personage as my Lord Graystock. He, therefore, persuaded Adam to adopt a more temperate course by gaining the influence and countenance of the King; and if those could not be procured, as we shall presently perceive they could not, an appeal to the sword would then of necessity become the *dernier ressource*.

Such were the two young men, who with their followers, were introduced into the banquetting hall of Mitford Castle. The confusion created on their entrance awakened Walter Selby from his slumber; and likewise some of the Bacchanals under the table, to whom a refreshing dose, had perhaps been the means of restoring a partial soberness.

"What now, what now?" ejaculated Selby, with his eyes half open, and stroking at the same time his beard, which chanced to be somewhat disordered by the posture in which he had been sleeping, "mercy on us! more company, Gilbert. Your wine before the vesper tolls to-night, will be less by half than it was this morning. May I ever eat Coquet salmon again, if Gilbert Middleton is not the kindest soul in Christendom (here Walter emptied the flagon). And what gossip have you about the King and his termagant Queen, master Swinburn?"

"You were complaining, before you slept, of sloth and inactivity,

and wishing, from the bottom of your heart, Walter, the time might not be far off when we should be joining in battle and carrying away booty. We are likely, by the mass, to have enough of breaking of spears, and clashing of head-pieces, before we are three days older; but whether your wish for plunder will be gratified, is what I am inclined to fear," said Gilbert Middleton to Selby, when the new guests had seated themselves, and welcome victuals, hot and plentiful, were placed before them.

"If my chesnut gelding, three days hence," answered Selby, is bearing me to storm citadel, or to do aught of a like nature, I vow I will present a silver cup the size of my helmet to the Carmelites on the Wall-knoll in the good town of Newcastle, ere two moons have waxed and waned. But let us have a history, Adam Swinburn, of your gay doings at York, for I have a guess, her Majesty's ladies, would look often askance at those eyes of thine."

"Nay, marry," replied Adam Swinburn evidently pleased with the compliment, "maidens would not gaze at one who scowled as I did when the King told me, aye, told me to my face (on saying this Adam reddened to the very ears with anger, so irascible was his nature,) that from what he had learned he conceived the filthy, dastardly, villain Graystock was justly entitled to my fair fields, and that if I agitated the matter further, he would imprison me; oh! King as he was, Walter Selby, I could have stained my dirk with his best heart's blood, when these words tingled in my ear."

"Hush, hush, Adam, you should not speak treason even amongst friends," said Philip Twizzell in a low, sickly, and cautious tone.

"Treason! away with the word," responded Adam Swinburn, raising his voice to a higher pitch than he had yet used, "treason! by my halidome, that King is no better than a bundle of straw, a mere scarecrow, a thing for babes, who is lead by the nose both by his lascivious Queen and the fawning minions around him, and cannot moreover do justice, because, forsooth, my Lord of Lancaster does not will it."

Yes, that proud Earl I know is at the bottom of all. He is a boon companion of Graystock's. Graystock heard I was going to the King, and he, the cunning scoundrel, procured this churl Lancaster to persuade the driveller to lend a deaf ear to my suit, and give those good lands, which honestly came to my hands from my poor old father, to the monster who has had the audacity, the atrocious villany, to seize them lance in rest, and drive out my vassals with fire and faulchion. Would that I had him a moment within this grasp;" and Adam, as he concluded, gnashed horribly with his teeth, and clasped the hilt of his sword with such firmness, that the drops of sweat stood on his swarthy brow, like the rain on the leaves of a large plant, after a thunder shower in summer.

"Why torment yourself in this way, Adam," said his sister Matilda Middleton, who had, on her brother's entrance into the apartment of dissipation, resumed her seat on the right of her husband. "Gilbert, I'll answer for him, will give you every assistance in recovering your patrimony; but let me say your violence, now that the injury is done, is really of no use; in fact, I think it is highly prejudicial to your cause, and to yourself."

"It is impossible to endure such a wrong with the slightest degree of temper or calmness," answered Swinburn to the admonition of his sister.

"There is little doubt, Adam, that if my goodly array of fearless warriors, is added to your own, we shall be able to achieve something which will make *even* my Lord Graystock tremble in his stronghold. I cannot but assist you most cordially when my timorous dame can summon fortitude enough to urge me; although, to say truth, it was no longer ago than this morning, that she insisted upon my retiring from warfare altogether," said Gilbert Middleton, and he smiled graciously at his wife as she concluded.

"I cry you mercy, Gilbert," replied Matilda, "when I persuaded you to allow your sword to remain, henceforth, unsullied with the blood of noble or peasant, man or woman, I did but mean that you should wield it no more in the cause of rapine and sacrilege, but only in your own defence, and in support of the rights of your friends and kindred.

"Your meaning, I dare say, was very good, Matilda," rejoined Gilbert Middleton.

"And now, Master Swinburn," said Walter Selby, "that it is quite arranged we are to aid you in chastising this proud baron, inform us I pray, of what you saw at York besides a King who had not the firmness to act justly. Or if your memory is in such a tempestuous state, that you can think of nothing save your own miseries; perhaps you, Philip Twizell, will be obliging enough to perform that service for us which your cousin is neither able nor willing to do."

"The most momentous occurrence during our stay at York was the appointment of Lewis Beaumont to be Bishop of Durham, who intends to be formally invested with his new office on the high festival of Saint Cuthbert, which, you know, will be held in a very few days," said Philip Twizell, in order to satisfy Selby's prurient curiosity.

"Lewis Beaumont," replied Walter, "Is not that the stupid loon who has a braggart of a brother living on the borders?"

"The same," was Twizell's immediate rejoinder.

"Ha, ha, ha, so Lewis Beaumont is to be converted into a Bishop of Durham," said Middleton laughing the while most heartily. "Why I myself who am no learned clerk, could read a breviary better than that poor compound of vanity, ignorance, and folly.

"Did Lewis leave York, whilst you were there," said Selby as he returned a replenished flagon from his mouth to the table. "His train of soldiery and servants, I take it, would be as long as the river Wansbeck, and as glittering as the waters when the sun shines on them."

"This is Tuesday, and we set out from York last Saturday at noon; now, Lewis Beaumont will commence his march early to-morrow morning; on Thursday he will rest awhile at Darlington, and on the evening of that day, he will be at his castle within the walls of Durham," said Philip Twizell.

"And are you sure of this, Philip?" enquired Gilbert Middleton with visible anxiety.

"Were I kneeling before my father confessor, Jesu bless him, (and

Philip crossed himself with exemplary devotion) I could not speak with greater accuracy and truth."

"Matilda, my love," said Middleton to his lady in order to induce her to leave the room; "I think it would be prudent if Harry and you spent an hour on the battlements before the fall of the evening dews. You were not well yesterday; and this heated hall will, I am sure, be far from beneficial to you."

"Your advice is worth following," replied Matilda, who like a dutiful spouse, took immediately her departure, and made search for the companion of her intended airing.

"Now, mark ye my brethren," said Walter Selby with a sly leer, "I guess that he at the head of the table is about to propose something which will be found worthy of our best attention. That lady would not have been sent out of the room, unless her husband was going to give utterance to words which she would probably weep to hear."

"You are no false prophet, Walter," was Gilbert's answer, "and of a verity, the measure I shall now unfold deserves the consideration of every one in this castle, with the exception of her who has just left us."

A slight murmur of applause ran round the table, and a silence followed so deep and undisturbed, that the ripple of the stream without the fortress, could be heard distinctly,

"You have been told by master Twizell," said Gilbert Middleton, "that Lewis Beaumont, the new Bishop of Durham, sets out on the morrow from York, to take possession of his diocese. His retinue will doubtless not be a small one, and many individuals of rank and opulence, will help to compose it. Now, I conceive, if by a well-conducted attack, we can seize this vain-glorious prelate, on his journey to Durham; and at the same time, divest some of his splendid attendants both of their liberty and valuable accoutrements, we shall abundantly replenish our coffers, and shall be enabled, afterwards to levy war upon the villain Lord Gaystock, with redoubled vigour and effect. The ransom we shall require for the bishop, if we entrap him, shall of course, be worthy of such a distinguished individual. In a word, I am bold enough to declare, that I never had the happiness to plan a foray of greater feasibility, than that which I have, now, my trusty comrades, briefly disclosed."

The castle rang again and again, with the sonorous acclamations of the assembled Marauders, after they had heard their valiant leader thus relate his design upon the persons and property of bishop Beaumont and his friends.

"I have as yet never afforded you, Gilbert, the slightest aid in any of your schemes of violence and pillage; but so much do I relish that which has just fallen from your lips, so eager am I to revenge myself upon our dastardly king, and his infernal court, (a noise reverberated through the room by reason of the speaker dashing the bottom of a flagon, which he had raised high in air, with extreme and startling force against the table) so much do I thirst for Edward to hear that Adam Swinburn the man he has wronged, assisted in plundering his fawning minion, the new bishop of Durham, that, I trust, in this

enterprise, my dear Gilbert, you will consider the swords of myself and followers, entirely your own." Such were the approving words bestowed by Middleton's brother-in-law upon the ferocious attack intended to be made on the sanctity of a bishop.

"And when will your worship set out from Mitford?" enquired Hugh Coulson of Gilbert Middleton, with the civil and obliging air he always affected; though his heart was stored with feelings the very opposite to civility and good-nature.

"To-morrow," responded Middleton, "an hour before sunset, I think, we shall turn our backs towards Mitford Castle. We shall ride hard all night, and on the following morning, form an ambuscade somewhere between Durham and Darlington."

"The arrangement of this assault, believe me Gilbert, does you infinite credit; and for my own part, I have not the remotest expectation of our being defeated. The project teems so profusely with perfection, that it must, even Philip, obtain the approbation of your caution and coolness. Let me have another modicum of mulled wine? lisped Walter Selby, concluding with a troublesome hiccup.

"It will, I am convinced," said Philip Twizell, "by no means be difficult to make prisoners of the newly created bishop, Lewis Beaumont, and of any others of his companions whom it may be politic to lead into bondage. I conceive that Lewis will be intent more upon mummery and show than upon his safety; and his retinue will, in consequence, be composed of gaudy pursuivants, and bedizened flatterers, instead of hardy and indomitable veterans, like those round our table. I would recommend, however, the utmost secrecy in the management of the enterprise; for should the bishop obtain intelligence of our meditated onset, he will most probably procure armed men in abundance, and give us a warmer reception than we anticipate."

Gilbert Middleton and his company, jesting on the trepidation they would cause in the limbs of Lewis Beaumont, when they deprived him of his freedom, continued to "discuss their tippie," until a late hour. Walter Selby was borne to his sleeping apartment by four of his soldiers, (far from being sober themselves); Adam Swinburn became so superlatively outrageous when the fumes of the wine had reached his brain, that every fragile article in the banquetting hall would have suffered demolition, had he not been forcibly conducted to his repose;—his guides receiving while they achieved their task, as plentiful supply of rancorous abuse, as that volcano, his very voluble tongue, could pour forth. Soon afterwards a silence the most deep prevailed in the Castle of Mitford; and the full autumn moon, rolling in serenity through the heavens, gilded alike with her tranquil beams, the sombre walls of the fortress, the wide woods that girded them, and the polished casque of the lonely sentinel, as he paraded with measured tread, on the frowning battlements.

(To be concluded next Month.)

THE FACTORY SYSTEM.

"Upon the whole there remains no doubt upon my mind, that, under the system pursued in many of the factories, the children of the labouring classes, stand in need of, and ought to have legislative protection against the conspiracy insensibly formed between their masters and parents, to tax them to a degree of toil beyond their strength."—*Report of Mr. Power, Member of the Factories Inquiry Commission.*

If our motto be no proof of a conspiracy between the masters and parents of the factory children, it is at least an admission from one, who was commissioned to disprove the fact, that the children walking in factories "do stand in need of, and ought to have legislative protection," and though a Factory Bill has been made law, that legislative protection which these poor children "do stand in need of, and ought to have," still remains to be conceded to them.

When Lord Althorp took the Factory Bill out of the hands of Lord Ashley, his lordship with that candour, which is so much the object of general commendation, confessed that he apprehended the result, that he took upon him the care of such a measure unwillingly, and merely in obedience to the imperious dictates of public opinion. The good easy public were pleased with his lordship's compliance with their will; were charmed with his sincerity; and took it for granted, especially when they saw a Factory Bill passed, that, in fulfilment of the benevolent intentions of Mr. Sadler, the little factory children were really to be brought within the pale of the law; were to have effectively extended to them that "legislative protection" which they "stand in need of, and ought to have." With what surprise will this public hear, at the next meeting of Parliament, a motion for leave to bring in a bill for the Regulation of Factories! With what new admiration of his lordship's candour will they learn, that he admitted the force of public opinion only in order to evade it; that when Parliament shall meet again, the factory children will be just where they were before; that, instead of the protection of the law having been extended, as Mr. Sadler proposed, to all the workers in factories under *eighteen* years of age; instead of the protection of the law having been more effectually extended, as Lord Althorp, professed to wish, to all the children in factories under *thirteen* years of age; Lord Althorp's bill, will then, in February next, be only beginning to extend its benign protection to children under *ten* years of age: that in six months from that time, children of *eleven* years of age will also be taken under its care; that, in six months more its wing will be extended, so as to cover children of *twelve* years of age; and that, at the end of two years, to work a child to death in an English factory at all, shall at last be positively forbidden, *provided always* that that child shall not have attained the full age of thirteen years. Such is the gracious boon of Lord Althorp to the factory children.

Mr. Sadler, in the first instance, demands a limitation to ten hours work. Lord Althorp objects to this as too short a limitation. He sends out a royal commission to get up a case against the ten hours bill. The commission does its office; but, after speaking evil both

of the ten hours bill and its authors, is driven by the force of evidence to conclude by the recommendation contained in the 52nd page of the "*Report*;" that, *until the commencement of the fourteenth year*, the hours of labour during any one day shall not in any case exceed EIGHT, and it is in the manner above described, that Lord Althorp carries into effect the recommendation of the commission sought by the factory owners, and appointed by himself! So difficult and delicate a matter does it appear to his lordship to do justice; so great the deliberation with which it is to be aimed at, so nice the approaches by which it is to be reached. A few anonymous letters, a few unauthenticated tales were sufficient ground for depriving Ireland of law and a constitution. A parliamentary committee, a royal commission, and 1500 pages of evidence do not suffice to warrant the forbidding of proved infanticide. Perhaps Lord Althorp is not altogether in the wrong. To do mischief is an easy task; to do good is a matter of greater difficulty. There is a moral in the poet's description of *Avernus*; *the descent to hell is easy; the labour is to return*. There are some indeed who have braved the toil, and surmounted it.

Pauci quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, aut ardens exivit ad æthera virtus
Dius geniti, potuere.

But his lordship is not of the race of demi-gods. His virtue, confined to simple honesty, is not of the ardent character; and whatever god may look with favour on his labours, it is not the god of justice.

The tardy operation of this bill is proof that it is intended to be delusive; and those who are most interested in the measure, masters as well as men, admit that it is so complicated as to be altogether impracticable. It has been passed to evade the question for the present session; and it is curious to observe, that, though it does not serve the purposes of the workers; though, beyond the grace of delay, it does not serve the purposes of the masters; though it is useless to all other purposes, it has been contrived to serve the purpose of the ministers. It introduces a spy-police into the factories, and puts them under the *surveillance* of the government. The foundation of this was laid in an act passed in the 42 of Geo. 3, and entitled "an act for the preservation of the health and morals of operatives and others employed in cotton and other mills, and cotton and other factories." This act authorized the *justices of the peace* to appoint *visitors* of mills. The act of the present year improves on this model; and makes it lawful for *his Majesty* to appoint four persons to be *inspectors* of factories, which inspectors, or any of them, are also empowered by this bill, to enter any factory or mill, and any school attached or belonging thereto, at *all times and seasons*, by *day and night* and to *hold a court of inquiry upon the spot*. This is going pretty far. But this is not all. The said inspectors, or *any* of them, shall have power to make all such "rules, regulations, and orders," as they or any of them may deem fit for the due execution of this act, which rules, regulations, and orders shall be binding on all persons to whom they are addressed, or whom they may concern or interest. These regulations are to meddle with the management of schools to be

attached to the factories in virtue of other provisions of this bill, and also with certain registers of the "ages, sex, hours of attendance, and such other particulars as *to such inspectors may seem proper to be kept.*" The inspector is further authorized to order the owner or occupier of any mill or factory, to transmit in such manner as may be directed in such order, "any information with relation to such mill or factory, or with relation to the persons employed, or the labour performed therein, that *such inspector may deem requisite* to facilitate the performance of his duties." So far the *surveillance* of the inspectors. But these inspectors are further authorized to appoint "peace officers," (spy-police,) armed with power to enter the school or counting-house of any manufacturer, without the authority of a warrant, or the presence of a magistrate. These powers, to be sure, are granted to prevent imputed infanticide. But this is not the mode to prevent it. These powers are incompatible with that freedom which is the first necessity, and only security of a people; and if such powers are necessary to cause cotton-spinning to be carried on with safety to the lives and limbs of the people, then cotton-spinning ought to be prohibited and suppressed as incompatible with the public welfare. When we consider that civil liberty is still talked of amongst us, as a thing which has a positive existence in England; when we consider how many of the master-manufacturers have the wealth of princes, the mind recoils from the picture of sordid and abject baseness, which is presented in the assent of some of them to this barter of dignity, independence, and personal freedom for the blood-stained gains of oppression; and the hopes of patriotism are ready to sink benumbed by the chilling proof that the most favoured sons of England are so well prepared for slavery. The rejection of the clause which would have authorized the ministers to give these inspectors salaries, leaves room to hope that to carry this part of the bill into effect will never be attempted. But, though a dead-letter, it will remain on the statute-book, a monument of the intentions of the ministers, and of the influence of commercial wealth in sustaining the liberties of a country.

It is not, however, this part only of the Bill which will be inoperative. The Bill, in Lord Althorp's hands, has been remodelled by the masters; and they well know how to defeat its objects. The mockery of the people is sufficiently marked in the fact, that the Bill is moulded by those whom it professes to restrain, and who have avowed themselves a party opposed to it. They could not prevent some Bill from passing, and therefore they passed a Bill which should *do no harm*, a Bill which enlarges in favour of the master the discretion of the magistrate as to the amount of fine to be imposed in a proved violation of the law; which prescribes an impossible system of medical certificates, which certificates the child is forced to *get*, but which no one is forced to *give*, and which, instead of being a protection to the child will be a cover and an excuse for the master. The Bill, in short, merely puts off the discussion till next year, and the question is still before us what the bill of next year ought to be.

The demand of Mr. Sadler is for an effective ten-hours bill. But the question before him, and those factory owners who have made

themselves a party against him, has ceased to be a question of time. This party have now gone beyond Mr. Sadler on the question of time. Their own commission has given proof never again to be disputed, that there are some of the workers in factories, who are subjected to broken health and premature death by being worked more than *eight* hours a-day. The commission yielded to the demands of this party have recommended that all under thirteen years of age should be restricted to this time; and it ought for ever to close the ears against all that that party have now to urge, that this verdict against their past practices has been recorded by the jury which they packed in order to prove, that to work *twelve* hours a day in factories is not injurious to children, after attaining *eleven* years of age.

The verdict is conclusive against them. But against the factory children, it is still open for revision; and it is yet to be considered whether legislative protection ought not to be extended to children more than thirteen years of age. It has been urged as an objection to the period of thirteen years, that it is absurd to say that a child who needed protection from longer work than eight hours this day, should be able, on the next, to sustain twelve without injury. But in this objection there is more zeal than discretion. For, some period must be fixed; and the same objection would apply to any. The just view to take of the matter is, that, as the step from eight to twelve hours is so large, the period at which the change shall take place, ought to be determined by the consideration, not when eight hours will cease to be enough, but when twelve hours will be certainly not too much; and the largest range should be given to the protective influence of the law, in order that no wrong may be done in so delicate a matter as the life and health of infants. Now the commissioners expressly state that they have had no regard to this consideration. For, in their report, page 53, they say:—

“In proposing the foregoing limitation of the labour of children, we admit that, while a *certain proportion* of those who have passed the prescribed age, might *advantageously share in the benefits of restriction*, a certain proportion of those who are included in that restriction may without injury *work longer hours*.

What longer hours? Twelve? They do not say *that*. They do not mark that to *twelve* hours is the next step. They leave *that* out of their consideration. Their business was to ascertain whether any and what classes of the workers in factories needed protection; and they here admit that they have not recommended protection to be extended to *all* whom they found to stand in need of it. But it is worth while to see the ground upon which they have placed their recommendation. The following are the words of the report. They are taken from page 52.

“The grounds on which we recommend the above restriction on hours of labour to be limited to the *commencement* of the fourteenth year, are, 1. That, at that age the period of childhood, properly so called ceases, and that of puberty is *established*, when the body becomes more capable of enduring protracted labour. It appears in evidence from the statements and depositions of all classes of witnesses, *including the young persons themselves*, that the same labour which was fatiguing and exhausting at an earlier period, is in general comparatively easy after the age in question. 2. That from the com-

parative infrequency with which serious and permanent disease appears to have been produced, when labour did not commence before the *ninth year*, and was not immoderate, there is reason to conclude that the restriction now suggested will afford an adequate protection. 3. That in general, at or about the fourteenth year young persons are no longer treated as children; they are not usually chastised by corporeal punishment, and at the same time an important change takes place in what may be termed their domestic condition. For the most part they cease to be under the complete control of their parents and guardians. They begin to retain part of their wages. They frequently pay for their own lodging, board, and clothing. They usually make their own contracts, and are, in the proper sense of the words *free agents*. For all these reasons we conceive that this is the natural period when young persons may be placed on the same footing as adults, as far as regards the disposal of their labour."

It is upon the recommendation here given, that the restriction should extend to the commencement of the fourteenth year, that Lord Althorp has founded his bill. The ground for fixing this period is stated in the last paragraph of the extract above "that this is the natural period when young persons may be placed on the same footing as adults as far as regards the disposal of their labour." For this opinion the commissioners give as reasons, first, when the body becomes more capable of enduring protracted labour, that this is the age at which puberty is established, and secondly, that, in general, at or about the fourteenth year young persons are no longer treated as children, but become free agents. The second of their three reasons has reference to another part of the bill. But these *two* propositions are the grounds on which they recommend the *commencement of the fourteenth year* as the period when young persons may be placed on the same footing as adults, as far as regards the disposal of their labour;" and these propositions merely involve the simple question whether at the commencement of the fourteenth year children ought to be allowed to work in factories for twelve hours a-day.

The very language which is used in stating the affirmative is worthy of observation. Hitherto, in speaking of such matters, the custom has been to talk of fourteen *years of age*, of twenty-one *years of age*; and this is the common style of speech among the people. Why then do the commissioners now abandon it? Why not use the common language of the people and of the law; Why talk of the *fourteen years*? Why not say, as they mean, that at *thirteen years of age* children are to be deprived of the protection which this law ought to extend to them? Is it because it would have sounded strangely in the public ear, that *thirteen* is the age at which "puberty is established;" that thirteen is the age when children "make their own contracts, and are, in the proper sense of the word *free agents*?" The usual mode of dealing with children of whom judicious care is taken is to bind them in apprenticeships. They thus cease, indeed, "to be under the complete control of their parents and guardians." But the control of the parent is transferred to the master, and with it is transferred the legal power of inflicting corporeal punishment. The wages of the apprentice too are his father's, and not his own. The father is commonly bound, as a party to the contract of apprenticeship, to furnish the apprentice with food and clothing, and other necessities

suitable to his degree. So far is the apprentice from the condition of a free agent, that the law allows the father, who makes the contract for him, to extend the apprenticeship to the time when his son shall be one and twenty years of age; but forbids him to extend the contract beyond that time, expressly because the son will then become a free agent, and be in law capable of making contracts on his own account. And if a father bind his son at sixteen years of age to an apprenticeship of seven years, the son, on arriving at twenty one, is relieved, if he please, from the contract. Hence it is that fourteen years of age, and not thirteen, is the natural period of apprenticeship, admitting, as that age does, of the apprenticeship of seven years being terminated at the commencement of the age of legal manhood. So that neither is apprenticeship free-agency; nor, if it were, does it commonly commence "at the commencement of the fourteenth year." But factory children, it will be said, are not apprentices, and they are better entitled than apprentices to be called *free agents*.

As to the value of such free agency, let us examine a little of the evidence. First, from Mr. Pastler before the Committee of the House of Commons.

Question 9823. Do you think that under the circumstances which you have described, even adults can be regarded as perfectly *free agents*? Not at all; it is perfect nonsense to call them so; they are free to starve or obey the will of their masters.

Question 9824. Is not what an operative has given in evidence quite recently, a common occurrence, namely, the circumstance of individuals, of whatever age, being obliged to conform to the hours of labour prescribed for them by a solitary mill-owner, who perhaps commands the whole labour of a district; and that if those hours do not suit an individual, or his health is injured, and his life threatened, he has no alternative but to work for those long hours or to starve, since the parochial officers *will not assist him, while he can obtain work*?—I consider that the operatives of Yorkshire cannot be considered as free agents; I think it is impossible that they can, when it is a notorious fact, that there are thousands of them out of employment, who are always looking for work, and going to the masters in order to procure some; they are offering to work at lower wages, and then the masters say to those whom they have in their employ, "If you will not do the work at such a price, I know others who will."

The evidence abounds with testimony on the same point. But this is enough for the free agency of the parents. Let us see what is the free-agency of the children. A little further on Mr. Pastler is asked.

Question 9639. Do you know instances in which parents live entirely on the earnings of their children?—Yes I met with a case a little while ago of a man who lives a short distance from my house, and who said to me, "I hope you will get this ten hours Bill passed; I have two children, one seven and the other thirteen, at work at the factories, and I have not had the least stroke of work for "I think he said, the last thirteen months;" he told me they were earning 7s. or 8s. a-week; and he said, that little girl has to go a mile and a half very early to her work, and she comes home at half past eight, and all that I see of that child is to call her up in the morning, and send her to bed, and it almost makes my heart break; we cannot get any work, and I know that I am living by the death of that child; and he cried when he told me. In fact they weep, when they tell their tales, and the poor little children weep too.

This is not a solitary instance. The proofs that it is a common case are scattered through the evidence before the House of Commons. Some of the effects of it we will describe in the words of another witness. Joseph Frith, who having stated that he began to work in a cotton factory at six years of age, and worked twelve hours and a half a day; that he frequently fell asleep over his work, and was *then wounded by the machinery*; that his night's rest did not suffice to recruit him, and that he used to be wakened in the morning by his mother or sister; who, having stated these things, was asked:—

Question 6983. Did you not feel it, as a child, to be a positive act of cruelty, to be hurried to your labour so early?—Yes, excessively so; and when I talk to persons who have children going to factories, it makes my heart bleed; we cannot tell the tears which have been shed on those occasions; children are torn out of their bed in the morning; they have to encounter all weathers; they open the door and meet the snow-drift and the cold; and in these ways they have to undergo great suffering at a very tender age.

Question 6984. The parents themselves feel the extreme hardship which their children undergo by the present system?—Yes; but I am almost ready to believe that the natural affection of the parent is often lost; for the children leave in a morning, before day light at certain seasons of the year, and they never see them before seven or eight o'clock at night, and directly they come home they are asleep; and what instruction can they give them? they generally lose that real affection which parents ought to have for their children, for these children when they are at home are in bed, or in a state of stupor by the fire-side.

Natural affection in the parents being thus destroyed, the children being thus sacrificed to the necessities of their parents, rebel against their duty, set at naught the authority which is not accompanied by protection; and leaving their parents to suffer or perish, they become "*free agents*," they "*make their own contracts*;" and, as soon as they imagine they can shift for themselves, they think with the commissioners "that this is the natural period, when young persons may be placed on the same footing as adults, as far as regards the disposal of their labour." And this unnatural, this fatal dissociation from domestic ties; this the most miserable circumstance in their unhappy condition, is the ground on which the commissioners recommend, that at this early age these helpless victims should be deprived of the superintending care of the law. Let English mothers, tender as they are, exemplary as they are allowed to be in the discharge of all the duties which the mother's care imposes on them, let them declare what less than impudent mendacity would have described such creatures as *free agents*, and what less than flinty hardness of heart, could have recommended that such free agents should be abandoned to their own protection.

Setting aside then the pretended boon of free agency, let us examine whether the other position is tenable, that the present hours of factory labour cease to be injurious to persons of thirteen years of age. It is impossible here to examine the whole of the evidence on this point. But we may take a strong case furnished by the commissioners themselves; and we find such a one in the first page of the evidence on which they have founded their report. Fifteen witnesses are examined respecting the flax-dry spinning mill of Mr. Craig, at Prestonholme,

near Edinburgh. Mr. Craig's is a mill kept in good order. The first witness says that "Mr. Craig is very kind to the people employed." The last witness says Mr. Craig "would not permit any thing to be done to hurt the comfort of the people." This account is confirmed by other witnesses. There is more dust in a flax than in a cotton mill; but in a dry flax mill, there is nothing particularly injurious to the health. The hours of working at this mill are twelve and a half in the day. Let us see then whether the evidence in this case bears out the assertion that at thirteen the protracted hours cease to be injurious. Alexander Hill, thirteen years old, says that "he becomes very tired at night, and so sleepy that he even yet falls asleep." Joseph Ward, fifteen years old, "is tired in the evening, and often falls asleep at the work as he observes other boys and girls do." Christy Maclarin, whose age is not named, after being four years in the mill, "frequently falls asleep at her work, as all the young people do." Alexander Barr, fifteen years old, says "the long hours tire him and make him sleepy in the evening." Euphemia Stodart, twelve years old, says "the long hours tire her at night, so that she sometimes falls asleep." Mary Sangal, seventeen years old, "always feels tired and weak in the evening." Jeanie Walker, eighteen years old, "has been seven years in the mill, and finds it very hard work." Thomas Muir, about nineteen years old, is "anxious for shorter hours of work, as the long hours *tire them out*." Mary Stoddart says—"There is not one person in the mill who is not desirous that the hours of labour should be shortened." Such is the evidence of nine witnesses out of fifteen examined; and to this evidence nothing is opposed, except the evidence of Andrew Pedie, twelve years of age, who says that he *used to be* tired when he was younger; and of Mary Aitken, twenty-two years old, who says that "the *little* children frequently fall asleep at the work." But Andrew Pedie also says that "all are desirous of shorter hours of labour;" and Mary Aitken says that "the long hours are universally disliked here, as they '*tire out the workers*.'" And though she only earns from 5s. 6d. to 6s. a-week, 'she would rather have *less wages and shorter hours*.'" This case is conclusive. If evidence that long hours in factories are not injurious to young persons of thirteen years of age, could have been found any where it would have been found here. It was not found here, because "*Mr. Craig is a kind master to them all*;" and he therefore allowed them to speak their thoughts freely. To whatever body of evidence to the contrary the commissioners may pretend to shew, a reply is found in their own words in another part of the report. "The workers, especially the younger part of them, stand in great awe of their masters and overseers, and are much afraid of being dismissed from the work at which they are employed."

From the most dispassionate consideration of a case the most favourable to the enemies of Mr. Sadler's bill, from an examination of the grounds on which the recommendation of the commissioners was founded, from the confession of the commissioners themselves, it appears, that the bill of Lord Althorp, does not extend protection to all who require it; and therefore that a new bill is called for; and that bill ought not to give less than Mr. Sadler has demanded, namely

that, till eighteen years of age the workers in English factories should not be exposed to more lengthened labour than it is lawful to impose on an adult negro. But we should not do justice to the subject, without reminding our readers that the party who now resist this just and humane provision, have uniformly resisted every step towards improvement. We should not do justice to the workers in factories without attempting as far as in us lies, to guard the public against every impression from that quarter; and therefore we will not conclude without exhibiting a part of the mischief which this factory system has wrought in the pitiable case of Elizabeth Bentley. Her evidence was given before the Committee of the Commons; and we have not observed that it has yet been brought prominently before the public.

Question 5175. In what part of the mill did you work?—In the card room.

5176. It was exceedingly dusty?—Yes.

5177. Did it affect your health?—Yes, it was so dusty the dust got upon my lungs, and the work was so hard; I was middling strong when I went there, but the work was so bad; I got so bad in health, that when I pulled the baskets down, I *pulled my bones out of their places*.

5214. You are considerably deformed in your person in consequence of this labour?—Yes, I am.

5215. At what time did it come on?—I was about thirteen years old when it began coming, and it has got worse since; it is five years since my mother died, and my mother was never able to get me a pair of good stays to hold me up, and when my mother died I had to do for myself, and got me a pair.

5216. Were you perfectly straight and healthy before you worked at a mill?—Yes, I was as straight a little girl as ever went up and down town?

5217. Were you straight till you were THIRTEEN?—Yes, I was.

5255. Were you permitted to give up your labour at any time to suit your convenience or your health, and resume it again when you were more capable of it?—Yes, we have stopped at home one day or two days, just as we were situated in our health.

5256. If you had stopped away any length of time, should you have found a difficulty to keep your situation?—Yes, we should.

5258. Where are you now?—In the poor-house.

5259. Where?—At Hanslet.

5260. Do any of your former employers come to see you?—No.

5261. Did you ever receive anything from them when you became afflicted? When I was at home Mr. Walker made me a present of 1s. or 2s. but since I have left my work and gone to the poor-house, they have not come nigh me.

5262. You are supported by the parish?—Yes.

5263. You are utterly incapable now of any exertion of that sort?—Yes.

5264. You were very willing to work as long as you were able, from your earliest age?—Yes.

5265. And to have supported your widowed mother as long as you could?—Yes.

5266. State what you think as to the circumstances in which you have been placed during all this time of labour, and what you have considered about it, as to the hardship and cruelty, of it.

(The witness was too much affected to answer the question.)

If humanity be left among us, let the humane give for themselves the answer to this question, which was checked by the tears of the poor, maimed and crippled Elizabeth Bentley. Let them, if imagina-

tion have such force, place themselves in her position ; let them take in all the circumstances ; her youthful spirits, her straight and handsome person, her cheerful willingness to work, her maintenance of her widowed mother ; see her thus, a young, and joyous, and virtuous creature ; see the manner in which she has been offered piecemeal, a sacrifice to mammon in a country of boasted humanity and ostentatious piety ; estimate, if you can, the mental agony of the intelligent victim under the protracted torture ; and, then, see legislators disputing about the effect on " capital and profits " of putting a stay to works like these. Talk of tyrants ! talk of tortures ! talk of ingenious cruelty ! The instincts of avarice are more refined in cruelty than the most deliberate wickedness of man ; and never is despotism so fell, as when the jargon of the usurer disgraces the language of the senate, and, in the very hands of the law-giver, the lives of the people are weighed in the balance against the gains of oppression.

TO MY HEART.

A SONNET.

(From the German of Bürger.)

By many storms and troubles long oppress'd
Through the worlds wilderness my footsteps stray,
But soon, reposing from my weary way,
I, and my cares shall sink alike to rest.
My years are by my sunken cheek confess'd
And all the flowers of my youth decay ;
But yet, my heart, what is the reason, say,
That thou art beating strong within my breast ?
In spite of tyrant Time's despotic pow'r,
Thou'rt still the same as in the glad spring-hour,
Aye, am'rous as the nightingale thou art ;
But ah ! unmoved the fair Aurora hears
The tales of love which aged Tithon bears,
Alas ! would thou wert also old my heart !

J. O.

"Exposition of the false Medium and Barriers excluding Men of Genius from the Public." 1 vol. 8vo. p. 330.

"Good God! Sir, nobody will have anything to do with authors," Thus replied an old bookseller who was consulted on the means of removing the difficulties in his way;* and so says the author of the work before us. Ere we had read three sentences, this we said to ourselves has been penned by one writing under the agony of disappointed hope; this is as a gleam of sunshine, which has struggled through many a gloomy cloud, on its way from heaven earthward, until it hath become exchanged from the bright and life inspiring splendour of the sunbeam, to the lurid and sickening glare of the eye of the tempest fiend. Readers! think ye we exaggerate! Peruse the little volume, ere you pass so hasty a judgment. We have the "Annuals" arranged upon the shelves of our library in all the gaiety of their silken and gold attire. This we would bind in crape. It hath come, a mournful visitor at a fitting season, telling us of hopes blighted like autumn leaves, and enlisting our sympathies on behalf of many a child of genius, the victim of superstition, ignorance, or tyranny, the tenant of an untimely grave.

Did the writer not positively inform us that he is not a "disappointed author," our imagination would have pictured him before us; pale, care-worn, dejected, in one of the dark alleys of this wonderful city—in a still more dismal garret, where the passing of the winter-cloud can cause no additional gloom, and whither no cheering sun-beam finds its way from the unclouded summer's sky. A lamp casts its melancholy light around his apartment, wherein, in many a convenient corner, the noiseless and insidious spider has fabricated his snare,—nay we even can imagine that we see the diamond-like eyes of one of these treacherous animals, sparkling beneath the sleeve of an old threadbare coat, which had been suspended from a rusty nail since the last unsuccessful visitor of its owner to his publisher.

Whoever, and whatever our author may be, he has not found that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness." He has arrived at the melancholy conclusion that the world values not the gems of genius;—"A common stone meets with more ready patronage than a man of genius." This is the first sentence of the extraordinary work before us—its abruptness, the intensity of disappointed feeling which it breathes, plainly indicate that the writer was labouring under the influence of no ordinary excitement. In support of this startling position, he brings forward a phalanx of facts respecting the gifted sons of genius, who suffered under the discouraging neglect of the world: persecution, and poverty, on whose foreheads the deep lines of thought should have been hidden by the laurel wreath, but whose only earthly reward is to be found in a few letters carved on their tomb stones. "But," says our author, "the present exposition is not merely intended as a recapitulation of the distressing lives and fates of those whose lofty names in martyrdom the world bow down to, without blush-

* Williams's "Claims of Literature." London, 1802. p. 102.

ing for themselves ; it is not only a Chæphoræ in its libations to their hallowed tombs, but a retribution upon the oppressor's heads, both past and present, and an analysis and elucidation of the causes of these evils ; and a condensed appeal to the collected *now* of ages in the hope of calling a fresh and startled attention to the vast heap of gigantic facts, that stagnate and choke up the struggling current of long enduring humanity." And, we must say, if anything is calculated to produce this desirable effect, it is the work before us ; the very first sentence startled us like a flash of lightning ; it won upon our heart, and enlisted our sympathies in favour of our author, whoever he may be. As we read on, and on, we felt an accumulating interest in this unknown and his work ; and, as we sighed over the fate of those men of genius whose names are recorded on its pages, more than one feeling aspiration ascended from our bosom for him, who must himself have deeply felt what he wrote.

He commences with epic poets and philosophers, the virtuous, the gifted, the inspired, who " must be content to wait in the tomb for the secure reward of leaden-footed posterity." He briefly recounts the persecutions of Dante, the " outlawry " of Shakspeare, the penury of Milton, the misfortunes of Chaucer, the poverty and ruined hopes of Spencer ; he invokes the ashes of the murdered Socrates, of Seneca, Longinus, Boetius, &c. ; adduces the condemnation of Anaxagoras. But, surely, it scarcely falls within the design of the work, to include some of these, as well as many which follow, as instances of the persecutions of *men of genius, as such*. Their sufferings were, by a few, almost courted by them ; they must have known the risk and the consequence of promulgating opinions *moral* and *political*, in opposition to those of the times ; they must have been aware that trial and persecution, if not death would be their thorny and gloomy path to immortality.

In the third section, he takes a view of authors in general, their sufferings and privations ; but in many instances, forgets to inform us that in some cases these misfortunes were caused by their own imprudent acts ; and in others, by interfering with the political and religious opinions of their times. We cannot resist the temptation of extracting the opening of this chapter. It is a beautiful picture, although, perhaps too highly coloured.

"OF AUTHORS IN GENERAL.—In the fresh spring time of our existence ; when the eagle wing of sunward hope is strenuous in the glorious dawn, and the rich and rosy dews fall heavy on the opening flower that begems the path over which, with swelling bosom and unbaflled energies, we bound with feet that feel not the earth beneath them, while the voice is uplifted in full enjoyment of Nature's free and heartfelt presence—it is a good thing to be a ploughman. But to become an author, is to poison the sacred draught of heaven, and to bring down Olympus in desolate ruins over the highway of life ! Under what stupendous dreams are all his hopes buried for ever ! To till the wholesome earth, and reap the tawny harvest of the year, is a somewhat sturdy task "in the eye of Phæbus," and often felt to be a heavy manual toil ; but it hath no *certain* heart-aches for its reward ; and is a blythe and jocund labour, compared with his, who through the painful day, and dead enduring night, struggles and yearns towards the goal of immortality. The energies of his heart, are as the horses of the sun—his course around the vast empyrean, is at length accomplished—his reward, is squalid human misery ; with giant despair striding forwards in the clearing distance !

We extract this as affording a specimen of the author's style; but it does appear to us that he is one of the many who view their own evils through the medium of the magnifying and distorting eye of imagination, and contemplate those of others with the more correct and clear-sighted vision of philosophy. It is, indeed, a good thing to be a ploughman, with the sunshine of heaven above your head, and the sunny beams of prosperity and comfort playing around you, and perchance the light of the bright eye and smile of an affectionate partner or sister to cheer you after the labours of the day. Yes! it is "a good thing to be a ploughman." But every ploughman ploughs not his own soil. How often does he pursue his tedious and monotonous labour with a heart heavy and sad; for there are those at home who are crying for bread, but the ploughshare turns not up one bite for his emaciated and starving little ones. To use our author's words as applied to unfortunate men of genius, he finds that he gains "stones instead of bread." In a word, although there is too much truth in the contents of this volume, (and we grieve to confess it,) still the author seems too much inclined to exaggerate, and to "make mountains out of molehills."

He then contrasts the labours of the author with those of the manufactures, and gives us a highly wrought picture of the life of an author, who "dies in penury and wretchedness, and," continues the writer, by way of adding a still more sombre colouring, "it is well if his wife and children do not have the horror of seeing his corpse seized by his matter-of-fact, respectable creditors." We do not know the statute under which a corpse may be seized.

"Demosthenes, Cicero, Ovid, were banished;" true, but not as a reward for eloquence and poetry, but because they were unsuccessful in the game of politics. This, also, was the cause of Voltaire's imprisonment. Corneille and Rousseau reaped the fruits of their own imprudence; also did Rushworth; Raleigh and De Foe offended by their politics. We cannot follow our author through the long list which succeeds. As for Savage, he would have been in the same dilemma, had he possessed thousands, as his imprudent and thoughtless actions sufficiently justify us in inferring.

He then alludes most feelingly to the "Rejected Addresses" of authors, and to the system adopted by publishers, "even when the case is reduced to one of a palpable business-like advantage." Of this he gives us a unique instance, which we would advise our readers to peruse; it is too long to extract.

In the next section, upon "Disappointed Authors," amongst other effects of disappointment, he mentions that most afflicting and melancholy one of *madness*. Swift is instanced; but he, (if we may so express ourselves,) was determined to be mad. He predicted in early life that he should be afflicted with insanity.

The writer talks of the sympathy of the public being denied to authors of *whatever merit*, and that when their writing are attacked and calumniated, that denial also extends to any defence they may make. There was a time when the justness of this observation might have been admitted; but people now will form their own opinions of the merit of authors, without attending to the judgment of critics,

who are too often influenced by prejudice, and, in too many instances, when their good opinions cannot be *purchased* by a poor author, bestow their censures in no sparing manner.

In section V, (on Dramatic Authors,) is repeated the oft-told, and well known tale of the practices of the magisterial purveyors, accompanied by a doleful lamentation over the fall of the drama, and herein, we must again differ from our author. "The public," says he, "have been so long without any fresh effort of dramatic genius, that they do not seem to know wherein its essence consists, and the critics do not tell them." In fact, he contradicts himself upon the same page, when he says, "yet the quickness with which the public take up any thing that is put forth, especially if 'crammed down' with a high-flown ostentatious shew of tragedy, *proves at all events their wish to encourage, and contradict the false assertions of the managers.*"

Pass we on to the section upon composers and instrumental performers, and here the writer gives us another painful insight into the miseries of neglected genius. We shall select but one instance, that of the immortal composer of "Der Freyschutz," which was refused by the musical sages of the two large theatres, and eventually brought out at the English Opera, through the exertions and influence of Mr. Braham. But in this house, also, the directors disliked the music! and foretold its damnation! "It requires," (justly remarks our author), "it requires genius to discover genius: there must be, in some respects, an equality in kind, though not in degree, fully, or even rightly to appreciate original works of truth and power." This is easy of application to the directors above alluded to. Musicians as well as poets, must be *born*. The most intense study and application that mortal is capable of bestowing, for years, whose every wakeful moment has been devoted to the science, *may* render the student what is too commonly called a *musician*, or "*a professor of music*," but the essence of musical genius is wanting; and, if this deficiency prevents individuals from feeling and appreciating sublime compositions, how much more will the want of it tend to stamp the productions of those who have thus the body without the soul, with that inanity and insipidity by which they are invariably characterized. They are truly "of the earth, earthy."—They set to work like a mechanic; their melodies and harmonies are produced, as it were, by a sort of arithmetical process. The mere corporeal sense of hearing, and a strict and slavish adherence to antiquated rule and method seem to be their guide in the manufacture, and their test of the excellence of their merchandise.—Can such men presume to judge of the compositions of the inspired, such as Weber? No! even as the poet, so the musician must bring his flight far beyond the reach of his corporeal faculties. These must slumber, whilst his restless and unconfined soul breathes her heaven-born inspiration. They see not the mechanical contrivances of pen, ink, and paper before them, until the delicious trance has passed away, and, lo! they have recorded their dreams, far, immeasurably short of the visions and strains that enraptured them in those ecstatic moments; for words cannot record the poetry of thought, and the musician's best efforts give us but a

faint echo of the sublime strains with which his soul vibrates.—By whom can the productions of such men be appreciated, save by kindred spirits? And yet a final judgment had well nigh been pronounced upon Freyschutz. “Mr. Bishop modestly offered to put music of his own instead of Weber’s, as the manager liked the plot of the opera!” Can Bishop weigh a sun-beam in the balance. We will be charitable enough to suppose that Bishop had not heard the music, for we can assert, from our own observation, that the effect of it upon those even who are un-musical, is such as they never experienced from any other music. One of our friends, upon hearing it performed by a sextett band only of amateurs, exclaimed, “Now I like that music. It produces a most indelible effect upon me.” This friend had so miserable an ear that we verily believe he could not have sung or whistled “God save the King,” at the time this incident took place. Here, then, is a notable, a striking instance of the “false medium.” Weber died a few days after the first performance of “Oberon,” which, we fully agree with our author, is a most beautiful, and as original a production as “Der Freyschutz.” The “*climate*” killed him. True, it did so. Men of genius live and move in a little world of their own, wherein they are assailed by many a bitter and chilling blast, where every breath they inhale is tainted by envy, where their attempts to gain a livelihood are rendered fertile by ignorance or avarice; and, gentle readers; wonder ye that they at length fall victims to—“the climate?”

And now, a word to the instrumental performers, who are to the musician what the actor is to the dramatist, and why should they be driven to the extremity of pawning their instruments, whilst the actors are rolling along the streets in their chariots; But there are numerous causes which combine to keep these men in the back ground. One, and that not the least, is the extraordinary jealousy which is observable amongst musicians above all other people in the world. We have heard of one or two instances in which the leader of an orchestra has so placed a brother instrumentalist, of whose performance he was jealous, as to prevent the possibility of his being applauded; for, from his locality relatively to some of the more powerful instruments, there was little danger of his being heard at all. “There are tricks in all trades,” and this is, (at least *was*) one amongst leaders of orchestras.

We need not dwell upon the next section, which is devoted to actors and singers. All know the “dancing attendance” to which they are compelled to submit, and the way in which they are obliged, in many instances, to work their painful way to the approbation of the public; neither need we follow our author through his observations upon novels and novelists. We add to his recipe for novel writing “*probatem est*,” and would advise our readers to peruse it.

Painters and sculptors! why has our author separated them from good company, poets and musicians; but n’importe; perhaps he is right. Our own painters and sculptors, (with some exceptions,) have not shewn too much of the quality of imagination in their works, and therefore we say, perhaps he is right, to draw a line between them and their brethren of the arts. Far as we are behind other countries in musical science, we are still farther removed from excellence in painting and sculpture. “To the public,” says our author, “the Elgin marbles are a dead language, we have now possessed them some

years ; but we have no intellectual or pleasurable acquaintance with them whatever. It is all to come. There is no serious charge of stupidity in all this ; for they require the study of the most intellectual men, before their beauty and grandeur can become sufficiently apparent." Stupidity ! no ; nor can we comprehend why the mind which is so constituted as to appreciate the beauty of the most perfect epic poem, or of the most sublime compositions of music, should not as readily detect the beauties of a painting or a statue. The impression caused by a first, second, or third visit to the Elgin marbles, is not a fair instance. There are too many objects to distract and divide the attention ; and a stranger can no more appreciate their beauties than he can judge of the merits of two poems, by reading a sentence from the one and the other alternately, or of those of two compositions, by hearing them performed, at one, and the same time, by two bands. It is not what our author calls a "dead language ;" it is rather the confusion of languages. Let him visit the Elgin marbles again and again, and he will eventually have other reasons for praising them than merely "because it is unclassical not to do so."

With respect to what our author and others call the "higher walks" of painting and sculpture, we confess our unartist-like ignorance of the meaning of such expressions. Surely the sculpture of "Tam o'Shanter and Souther Johnny" is not to be despised, because the artist has portrayed a peculiar state of society along with the more invariable outlines of nature, yet the almost sneering way in which our author names it, would seem to imply as much. The mind too often seizes with avidity upon that which is exaggerated, or ideal. Was there ever any mortal being so perfect in figure as the statue of Venus ? Dare we assert that a sort of taste has too much obtained amongst artists, similar to that which has crept in upon the reading public, who prefer a romantic, and even an improbable tale, to the most natural, and heart-touching narrative. If, then, the intellectual classes of the fine arts, are most unprofitable professions, they are, perhaps, at the same time, not founded upon the most correct, and natural basis of real taste.

Men of science ! we gaze upon the page which opens with an account of your evils. The miseries, the toils, the anxieties and persecutions of those who "stood in the most dangerous position that a human being can be placed in, that of being wiser and better than the rest of mankind ;" of those whose light shone but to conduct them along their rugged path, with the dark clouds of ignorance above their heads, and the demon of superstition in the distance, grinning a welcome at the side of their yawning graves.

This of course refers to "times that were," and although in our more enlightened age, the man of science is no longer sent to solve his problems, and perfect his inventions in a dungeon, yet the difficulties with which they have to contend, and the neglect with which they meet, are sufficient to damp the ardour almost of the enthusiast. Then is that evil spirit of envy at work amongst men of science ? In the examination of a new opinion or theory, advanced by a brother labourer in the field ; philosophers are but too apt to forget their philosophy ; they forget to "prove all things," and content themselves

with confronting argument by abuse and the most ingenious hypothesis with self-conceited sneers. But we digress—our author presents us with a picture of Copernicus upon his death-bed. His treasures of knowledge, the work of a long life in accumulating, he spent his last moments in preparing as a legacy to an ungrateful world. A few hours after the press had given birth to the first printed copy, its parent fell into his last sleep. It is but a needless repetition to follow our author through his accounts of the difficulties and trials of men of science. They (with a few exceptions) shared the same fate with poets, philosophers, sculptors and painters, persecution and poverty whilst living, then the solemn mockery of a splendid tomb.

Next comes our author's "Exposition of causes," and first we are presented with those which operated in days of yore, when tyranny shrunk with instinctive terror from learning and science as its most dangerous enemies, and clung for its support and maintenance to the bodily strength and ignorance of the feudal lords, few of whom had been initiated in the dreaded mysteries of reading and writing. Hence the gifted and the *truly noble* of their time were marked for destruction by the hand of the destroying angel. But, putting kings and courtiers out of the question, our author proceeds to shew that "the cruel injustice to the learned is induced by the selfish apathy of mankind, occasioned by the general want of a sympathetic appreciation in the first instance; want of knowledge of the real merits of the author, reiterated and enforced by those who can teach it to them in the second; and lastly in the want of a practical continuity to the sentiments or sensibilities that may be excited upon the occasion."

There is too much justice in the following observations: "Authors are far from being united amongst themselves; conflicting interests and passions mar their own hopes with those of others; they maintain a continued civil war: their brotherhood is only with the dead; they are not true to each other while living or commonly just. It requires genius to discover genius, but it requires magnanimity to act upon the discovery."

Our author attaches a very limited degree of truth to the opinion that the personal misconduct or imprudence of men of genius is the chief cause of their misfortunes; he does not deny the occasional misconduct of many superior men, but attributes the cause of that misconduct to misfortunes or injustice. This, we think, is rather a strange position. A very little prudent forethought might, in many instances, have enabled them to avoid those misfortunes, and a little fortitude to have borne up against unjust treatment; but, even admitting that such misfortunes were the result of circumstances which they could neither foresee nor control,—granting that they were so assailed by unforeseen misfortunes, and that they thus met with treatment the most unjust and undeserved, their misconduct, on that account is not to be excused, how much soever it may be palliated in the opinion of the charitable. "Strong passions," continues our author, "that can find no proper vent, must either destroy the individual with their smouldering and wasting fire, or else break forth in wrong directions." Again, "the intellectual effects of a man's genius, absolutely considered, are in his own power, not so his social position,

or even his own conduct. The public at large are the *standard* of moral character in theory ; men of genius are expected to be equally perfect in practice ! But, sooth to say, the personal misconduct of men of genius, whether placed in a fit station or otherwise, is not one atom worse, even at their worst, than the misconduct of the countless mass of those 'Kings, Lords, and Commons,' who die and leave nothing behind but the memory and effects of their vice and mischief." In other words, we presume our author means to say, men of genius err from necessity, and in good company. This reminds us of the happy days of yore, when our tutors sometimes deemed it expedient to castigate us. We, selfishly enough, thought it exceedingly pleasant when other sly urchins were involved in the scrape as well as ourselves. There was companionship in our faults and in their consequence, our correction ; but we confess that although the blows seemed to fall less heavily than when we suffered singly and alone, *we thought not a whit the better of ourselves, because others were as bad, or worse.* Somehow, we feel loath to give up this opinion. We think we were right.

"Our own times !" and what of them ? Why, that an author is as liable to be starved now as ever. "In his persecution, ruin, and destruction, the perpetration differs in nothing but *manner* from the barbarous ages." They are "ridiculed, insulted, calumniated, or left neglected to die in penury ; and in most cases have suffered a combination of all." But why, our readers will ask, can they not come forward and show themselves, and give the world an opportunity of not neglecting them ? This question is also asked and answered by our author. He draws the curtain from before the publisher's arras, and introduces us to one of his "false mediums," or publisher's reader. "Here," says he, "is the unknown, unsuspected enemy, who works to the sure discomfiture of all original ability," one who sticks to precedent with a lawyer-like pertinacity. Novelty puts them out, and confuses all the understanding they possess, consequently, the more original the work, the greater is the obstacle the poor author has to overcome.

But let us examine the account our author gives us of one of these "false mediums," it is, decidedly one of the best written portions of the book ; it is graphic in a high degree, imaginative, and very witty at the expense of the poor "reader." We wish we could extract the whole, but we must endeavour to condense and select. We will begin with the host of epithets which our author, in the bitterness of his feelings, unsparingly applies to that false medium which he calls a publisher's reader. He is a "skeleton,—a fool in the dark, sometimes a knave, an earth-clagged spirit, the publisher's Delphic oracle, they are 'oughts and crosses,' shoals, upon which founder both publishers and authors." Readers ! are ye satisfied ? If not, we have yet more. These readers are furthermore "sub umbra Aristarchian gentry, things of shreds and patches, impotent in all good deeds, invisible as calumny." Of course, then, such a gent can have no "local habitation," but he has a name, and our brother calls him Adam. "But where," he exclaims, "has he disposed of himself ? in what dark nook of Lethæan welcome has he crouched ? Adam where

art thou?" There are yet a few more hard names for a poor Adam; he is an "unsympathetic, self-taught man, one of the sapient race." Then his name is changed from Adam to Daniel. "It is very extraordinary where this slippery Daniel has esconced himself. We thought we saw the 'shadow of a shade' steal past a while ago, like a thief in the night. But we have surrounded him, and locked up all the loopholes, and he cannot escape." Readers! yet more epithets for Adam alias Daniel. He is "a human diagram, a picture of accurate, formal, highly-finished details, with no subject or foreground, the prototype of the soi-disant architect of a building, who carried about some bricks as a specimen, he is made up of bold lines, and mathematical out-works, and has no substantial concentration;" (and yet our author surrounded him, even as the one individual Irish soldier, surrounded his four prisoners.) He is "atomic, like automatonr things who have the passions cut and dried for them; he is incorrigible in his mistaken studies; he pours over the gospel according to St. Criticism, and we, who are living men, with all our feelings about us, are to be crippled, bound hand and foot, hamstrung, broken upon the wheel, and melted to make candles for him to read by! Upon this heretic lore he gazes 'with fervency,' like Anthony when he fished up the red herring. It is like the celebrated 'Anatomic Vivante,' who was very fond of shutting out the sun, and reading by the light of a candle placed behind him, and showing through his empty case upon the sullen page," &c., &c. Again, "he would have the sea swim upon the ships, and insists upon a tempest conducting itself with discretion. He would put snaffles and patent bits into the brazen jaws of the four great winds, and teach all things propriety. There is no excitement in him except the vicious one of heartless mischief; he is a mere critic, who has no ideas beyond criticism; he is a cunning clown turned conjuror, the geometrico-moral opposite of Mr. Hazlitt, a bigotted sectarian upon the crutches of false knowledge; the clearness of day-light confounds him; his wisdom only moves amidst a haze of obscurities; he is an owl." Yet still more. "He looks into himself with sage scrutiny, (like a jack-daw in spectacles peering through the roof of an empty house,) and mistakes the *Aristarchian idiosyncrasy for the categoric gauge of a transcendental universality*. He stands over a vacuity, and talks to himself, 'Ahem! quid agis?' and the echo answers, 'De omnibus rebus, et quibusdam aliis.' This he writes down; he considers it a favourable answer, including every truth. He is St. Patrick's own philosopher without Irish wit; he has a Sawney's cunning without Scotch ability; a Taffy's turnip-headed understanding, without Welsh honesty; a Cockney's pert wrongheadedness, without English resolution. In short, he is without name or country, and has no intellectual existence, except in the idea of his perplexed employer!"

This, readers, is like a winding up; but no! he is at him again, and continues his panegyrics for the space of other twenty-one pages. We can afford room only for one other extract.

"There is no high faith, hope, or charity, in his composition. He has no reverential love of truth; no tenacious fear of being wrong upon an important abstract question; he has no real feeling about literature; it is his

business not to have any. He sets up a pugnacious standard of mechanical moral perfection—himself the “mixed mode” pewter pagod of the cause—to which, thank heaven, he can find no genuine author bow down or conform. Strong only in the principle of exclusive self-love; or every man his own idol—though probably, to ensure support, they take it in turns to be King Log, or the cock ninepin—the “class” stand round in their puppet station, and only escape knocking down so long as they continue invisible. What do they support and advocate? Not even the bald skeleton of power; not the fossil remains of grandeur—but the erect brazen serpent of ignorance—and the stalking-horse of presumption. They never fight unless under cover; and if once apparent and attacked openly, they vanish for ever. There is no reaction in them, except on the side of their weakness; but until the storm be blown over they either lie perdu and brooding fresh mischief, or get up a sort of contest in small, a little pic-nic of private venom and malice, to “keep their hands in;” a kind of *Bactricomminomachia* among themselves, by which no harm is done, or good either; for they never kill one another.”

We have here presented our readers with part of the elaborate sketch, we had nearly said *caricature*, which our author has given us of poor Daniel, alias Adam, the publisher's reader, and must refer them to the original; for, with all its redundancy of colouring, it is worthy of inspection. But, what fools the author would have us to think the publishers. Hear him thus address one of them: “Oh! thou poor employer! most Christian publisher! most patient, put-upon of men! how little dost thou dream that thy money-trap has a hole in its bottom exactly the size of the reader's head; that thy name is become a by-word for ‘trash’ among sensible men, and an echo for bankruptcy among the people! There is no great fault in thee; it is thy mar-plot—and thy mischief-maker that is the cause of all!” Really, according to our author, the publisher must be even more imbecile and ignorant than his “reader.”

We find that we have now reached only a little farther than midway through the book, and must draw our remarks to a conclusion. We shall resume the subject next month, and, in the mean time, we can assure our readers that they will derive much pleasure from a perusal of the book. Its pages bear the impress of the stamp of genius, and that of no common class.

We could have wished to add a few remarks upon his proposed *remedy*, but it will better accord with our method to reserve these for a second notice.

We were here closing the book, but in the act of doing so, our eyes chanced to fall upon the concluding two pages, and we could not resist the temptation of extracting them.

“Babylon is dust!” Rome, a ruin of much name: Babel a dream: even as the Pyramids shall be a ruin, and dust, and a dream! But if in solitude, with a keen sense of the desolate end of his youth's aspirations, the self-exiled man of genius, sad as the prophet of old, full to overflowing in heart and in mind, yet lonely as Fortitude, cannot suppress the yearnings of his soul; let him at leisure hours, set apart from the employment or toil that sustains his body, and in its healthful action leaves no long intervals for the entrance of the world's feverish vanities, ambitions, and their follower, Despair; let him build up a fabric for posterity, grounded upon his scorn of individual time. Let him work out a deep and broad foundation of elementary truths; let him dig from the quarries of Nature her antediluvian

stores, which ages of human conventions, customs, and mutabilities have reversed. Let the ponderous corner stones and the base of the central pillar, be wrought of sheer and solid humanity. Let him fashion his materials to the strong and polished understanding of modern times—avoiding effeminacy as oblivion—according to the method manifested by her highest sons; dismissing from his mind all lower grades of excellence, and all the vague rumours, errors, and temporary admirations of the multitude. Let him have firm faith in his heart, as in a God head; in his imagination, as the primitive faculty of *all* genius; but let him never forget that his reason and judgment must be their severe examiner and stern artificer. Then from its deep foundations and vast scope, let his firm edifice rise in embattled stateliness; adorned and replete with power and beauty; clear as the morning light, and placid as the silent pathos of the stars. A monument of suffering, and a mastery over Fate. The cross—the passion—the divinity!”

THE SNUFF-BOX.

A PHILOSOPHICAL TALE.

“If it be now, 'tis not to come, if it be not to come, it will be now.” — HAMLET.

“Spirit of Nature, all sufficing power,
Necessity! thou mother of the world!” — SHELLEY.

What a sublime doctrine is that of necessity! What a complete view does it afford us of the cause of all human happiness or misfortune! The necessarian perceives that nothing comes from chance, he sees that all events are connected by an indissoluble chain, and that whatever happens, it is impossible that it should happen otherwise. He observes what great occurrences spring from apparently trivial causes, that even turning down one street instead of another often leads to numberless adventures; he remembers that if a high wind had not arisen, Eneas would never have touched the Carthaginian shore, and that Dido might have reigned in peace, and died in her bed. Had it not been for an apple falling, the world might never have been enlightened by the theories of Newton; had it not been for a snuffbox, the dire events recorded in these pages would never have happened.

“It is, indeed, a most unlucky box,” said Mr. Smithers, a respectable tobacconist in ——— street, as he was one night surveying his wares, “a most confoundedly unlucky box; there it has been lying these ten years, and there, in all probability, it will lie for ten years more.”

What he said was partly correct; the box in question had remained stationary as an Egyptian pyramid, in the midst of the various changes which had taken place around it; it had seen boxes of all shapes and materials successively come in fashion, and successively go out, and yet

there it stood in Mr. Smithers' window in proud defiance of customers; it had never been in fashion, it could please no taste. Its form was rather singular, it was a regular pentagon, and on the lid was portrayed the face of an old military gentleman, with such a wooden cast of countenance, that one would have supposed that the original never existed anywhere but in the painter's imagination. Mr. Smithers had long despaired of selling it, and already considered it as one of his household fixtures.

However, the conjecture that he would keep it for ten years, turned out, as we shall presently find, to be incorrect. Scarcely were the words out of his mouth, when Mr. Clarke walked into the shop. This Mr. Clarke was a red faced choleric little man, clad in buckskin breeches and top-boots, one of that class who are clamorous at the slightest suspicion of being imposed on, and yet are taken in sooner than the more unsuspecting, one who (to quote a *Misery of Human Life*,) "would haggle for an hour with a surly hackney coachman about sixpence, and then leave a new umbrella in the coach;" on this occasion he had his pocket picked of his snuff-box, his temper, never very placid, was grievously ruffled by this occurrence, and looking like a bantam cock in a fit of jealousy, he bustled into Smithers' shop to supply his loss. Mr. Smithers showed him several boxes, all of which he petulantly rejected, continually grumbling at the hardness of the times, the increasing price of every thing, and the like, until Smithers produced the little pentagon, and named its price as one shilling and sixpence, when he ordered it to be filled with snuff, and then dashed down his money, and bustled out of the shop as quick as he had bustled in.

He reached his lodgings and seated himself in a chair, by his little round table, under which his dog Towzer was quietly reclining, this like Launce's dog Crab was "one of the sourest natured dogs" that ever lived; he was civil to none but his master, which, perhaps might arise from a similarity of temper; strangers he would bark at like Cerberus at the gates of Avernus, and his very good humour consisted in a quiet snarl. Presently the door opened, and the servant entered with the supper-tray, and at the same moment did Mr. Clarke's evil genius prompt him to take a pinch of snuff. By too unfrequent usage the lid of the box had acquired such an affection for the lower part, that it required some exertion to separate them, and it, consequently, flew open with a sort of jerk, which caused some of the snuff to fall into Towzer's eyes, which caused Towzer in his agony to run bolt against the servant, which caused the servant to drop the tray, and upset the table, leaving the room in a state of "utter darkness."

"Curse the box," said Mr. Clarke, and surely the event justified the expression; a more perfect, and, at the same time a more disagreeable illustration of the doctrine of necessity could not be witnessed, never were causes and effects united in a more palpable chain, and every link of that chain was a fresh disaster. It was sufficient to ruffle a more even temper than Mr. Clarke's.

Disgusted with the instability of human happiness, he went to bed supperless, and in the dark, leaving Jenny to bring order out of the new-formed chaos as well as she could; true, he went to sleep, but

his rest was disturbed by unpleasant dreams, visions of wooden-faced old men, snarling curs, falling supper-trays, and screaming women, all conglomerated in the most disagreeable manner possible. He awoke in the morning restless and feverish; his first impulse was to count the money in his pockets, when to his great annoyance, he found that he was exactly nineteen shillings short. Such a singular sum! He had not changed gold the evening before, he thought his theatrical expences and the price of his snuff-box had taken all his silver, yet had he a shilling too much, and a sovereign too little; how could it be? stop a moment! horrid thought! yet it must be so! He discovered that in his fit of petulance he had given one pound and sixpence, instead of one shilling and sixpence to Mr. Smithers.

"D—the box," shouted the unfortunate Mr. Clarke, and without more words he threw up the window, and hurled the box out, with the force of a "Balearian sling," neither knowing nor caring whither it went.

Opposite to Mr. Clarke, lodged a gentleman of quite a contrary disposition; his name was Tomkins; he was as mild a man as ever breathed, he would interpret even an insult in the softest sense, he never resented any thing, he was of a perfectly dove-like temperament. He was sitting at his breakfast, gently sipping his coffee, and reading a new novel, when the hero of our tale, (videlicet the snuff-box,) flew into his room through a pane of glass, upset his coffee, and bathed his novel in the oriental infusion. Another man would have felt indignant, or at least vexed; not so Mr. Tomkins: he considered it purely as an accident, calmly balanced the gain of a snuff-box with the damage he had sustained, and accordingly put the offender in his waistcoat pocket.

At five o'clock he went to dine with a friend in the neighbourhood, and found a numerous party assembled, among whom was an old military gentleman, who, because he had been abroad twice in his life, fancied himself justified in afflicting all his acquaintance with the most improbable and lengthy stories imaginable; he seemed to have taken out a licence for lying, and to have proceeded accordingly. When he had continued talking for about three hours, without any other person uttering a word excepting such as, "Sure!" and "You don't say so!" &c., all his audience began to be weary, except Mr. Tomkins; he, good-natured soul, could listen to any body, like wax, he was open to all impressions; with the greatest complacency did he hear the old soldier tell his weary tales, listened to the narrations of his battles without ever wishing he had fallen in one of them, nay, gave signs of admiration, which must have delighted the most fastidious of egotists. The warrior at length paused, and the company began to hope that he had exhausted his stock of fiction; but no, it was merely to clear his throat, and that once done, he commenced a new story, which promised greater length than that of its predecessors. Even the patience of Mr. Tomkins felt itself on the ebb, even he felt his politeness oozing away, but his natural good humour gained the victory, he placed his snuff-box on the table, and again prepared to listen; immediately the rest of the party began winking and giggling in a most unaccountable manner, their weariness seemed to

have vanished, and mirth to have taken its place; what could it mean? there was nothing comic in the old gentleman's story, on the contrary, it treated of the starvation of a ship's crew, every incident dwelt on with the most painful minuteness; yet even at the most affecting parts did the whispering and giggling continue, until it reached the ears of the old soldier; he stopped his narration, and with some warmth remonstrated with the company, but the titter far from being suppressed gradually increased into a roar, and every corner of the room reverberated with shouts of laughter. The man-of-war cast his eye around with an inquiring aspect, till, at last, with an appalling look he glanced at Tomkins: "You shall hear more of this, sir," said he, and rushed indignantly out of the room.

Mr. Tomkins was petrified; he was aware of no offence, he had not been one of the laughers; why should all the indignation of the offended hero light on his head? He had listened with the most profound attention to all the long stories, and why should he be the scapegoat of the whole company? his astonishment was increased by one of the party approaching him, and saying, "Egad, Tomkins, you are a bold fellow; I did not know you had so much pluck." "No!" remarked another, "now I always thought Tomkins had a satirical turn." "Well done, Tomkins!" cried a third, "you set down that old bore in style." Now neither boldness nor satire, as Mr. Tomkins was well aware, were his peculiar characteristic; he was too gentle for the former, too inoffensive for the latter. He asked his friends for an explanation, but in vain. "Ah, Tomkins!" said they, "don't sham ignorance—sly fellow—does you credit." Whatever this credit might be, he had acquired it most involuntarily, he found himself signalised as a man of valour and a wit, without the slightest suspicion of what could be the cause.

He returned to his lodgings, and found a small note on the table which he opened and read as follows:—

"Sir,

"I am not used to be insulted with impunity, if you must indulge your taste for sarcasm at my expence, I shall, at least expect the satisfaction of a gentleman, I shall be at Chalk Farm by six to-morrow morning.

"Your obedient Servant,

"HECTOR IRONSIDE."

If Mr. Tomkins was astonished before, he now doubted his own eyes, he was ready to doubt anything, even his own existence, like Des Cartes; especially as he had lost that philosopher's proof of existence, "*Cognito ergo sum*," for, indeed, all his thinking powers were annihilated. A challenge! he receive a challenge! he would as soon have expected a note from the man in the moon; he had done nothing, said nothing, had not even smiled; yet was he to fall a victim to the ill-manners of his friends; a mystery is never very delightful, but it is particularly unpleasant, when it can be solved by a bullet alone.

Fired by a something, which it would be a perversion of words to call courage, perhaps it was, on the contrary, the dread of ridicule; and perceiving the impossibility of apologising, as he had not the slightest notion what offence he had committed, he instantly dispatched a note to Captain Ironside, politely accepting the challenge. He had now

an opportunity of signaling his valour, which he would readily have foregone ; and, gentle as he was, could not avoid cursing in his heart, all the military captains in the world as promoters of discord, and disturbers of good fellowship. It was one o'clock in the morning, yet had no inclination to go to bed, he tried to read, but in vain ; the words danced before his eyes ; he threw his book down, and paced up and down the room as if he had what is termed the fidgets. Presently the clock struck two, and reminded him, that in four hours he would probably be crossing the Styx ; there was a singing in his ears, a dizziness in his eyes, he actually could not bear himself ; he continued walking violently though his knees trembled at every step, his mind was conglomerated, he could think of nothing distinctly, his throat was parched, and he felt sick at heart. In this pitiable state did he remain two hours, when he was aroused by the clock striking four. He tried to compose himself, to nerve himself ; he tried to imagine, that life was not worth the possession, and that death was a happy release from all sublunary troubles, he even began to sing ; " When in death I shall calm recline," with an affected air of levity : but it would not do, the notes passed his lips, about as cheerfully, as the wind, when it whistles through a family vault ; he threw himself into a chair, and again took up a book ; he was an admirer of the old English drama and this happened to be Marlowe's " Faustus," the book opened at the following lines :

" Now thou hast but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damned perpetually."

If the spirit of evil had resolved to torment poor Tomkins, he could not have chosen a more uncomfortable passage, for the first time in his life he hated old Kit Marlowe, and, flinging the book into the opposite corner of the room, again relapsed into a waking dream.

At five o'clock he started from home, and at six reached the place of appointment ; how he got there, heaven only knows, he did not know himself, he had found his way by instinct, like a drunkard ; but his was the intoxication of fear, not of liquor. The captain arrived at the same time, and, almost before Tomkins knew where he was ; places taken, pistols fired, and—we rejoice to say—both the heroes remained unhurt. The perception of this fact was the first clear idea, which had entered the mind of Tomkins for some hours past, a weight was off his mind, and his intellect was once more enlightened ; he even recovered sense enough to ask the valiant Hector what was the cause of this chivalrous proceeding. It was now the captain's turn to be astonished, he gazed at Tomkins with silent wonder ; had his antagonist asked the question before firing, he should have thought he wished to avoid the contest by shamming ignorance, but standing to be shot at first, and asking afterwards bore at least some stamp of sincerity.

" Are you, indeed, not aware of the cause ?" said he after some seconds.

" Upon my honour, no," said Tomkins.

" Are you not aware that you have a caricature of me in your pocket ?"

" I never bought a caricature in my life."

" Look at the lid of your snuff-box."

Tomkins drew forth his box, and for the first time perceived a striking though ridiculous likeness between the wooden-faced gentleman painted thereon, and captain Ironside, whether chance or the devil had designed it, he knew not; be that as it might, there was the resemblance, sure enough. He explained to the officer, how the box had come into his possession, who, perceiving the satire was purely accidental, laughed heartily, shook hands with him, and invited him to breakfast; Tomkins threw the offending box over an adjacent hedge, and the antagonists have been sworn friends ever since.

We read in ancient history, that the children of the old inhabitants of Majorca were not allowed to eat their breakfast, before they had knocked it off a tree with a sling. An imitation of this exercise is still carried on among the moderns; we know not its classic name, but it is commonly known by the rather inelegant name of "Cock-shy." It consists, as many of our readers will know, in placing a snuff-box on an upright staff fixed in the ground, and allowing any venturous youth to throw at it, on the payment of a penny for three throws, or as the initiated call them, "shies."

One of the priests of that blind gooddness fortune, we mean, one of those illustrious characters, who gain their livelihood by presiding over this noble diversion, was walking along with a bag of snuff-boxes at his back, when the subject of our tale struck his eye; he instantly picked it up, added it to his collection, and proceeded towards a fair held at some little distance from the spot. He was interrupted in his course by a party of boys going to school, who entreated him to set up one of his boxes as a mark for their dexterity; after due deliberation, after having perceived the state of his supplicants pockets, he consented, and our hero was drawn from the bag and placed on the staff accordingly. The first boy who threw was a noted bad aimer, whenever he played at cricket, he usually hit the batsman's head instead of the wicket; when he played at marbles, he shot them into his playmates eyes rather than the ring; to be consistent, therefore, in aiming at the snuff-box, although the proprietor stood at what any one would have deemed a safe distance, instead of hitting his mark, he gave the luckless man a most tremendous blow on the shins; upon which he began to utter such horrible imprecations, that the boys almost expected to see the earth swallow him up as the reward of his impiety. These thoughtless youths attributed the misfortune to their companion's clumsiness alone, but our enlightened readers will readily perceive that the peculiar propensity of the box to involve its possessor in some disaster or other, had no small influence in the affair. As cursing and swearing is a panacea for most wounds of this class, the minister of chance* shortly recovered, and the boys continued to throw without any fresh misfortune, and also without any success; till, at length, having exhausted their money and their patience, they all moved off save one. That one merits a particular description.

* Should this word "chance" appear inconsistent with the doctrine set forth at the beginning of our tale, we beg to inform our readers, that we merely make use of a common term, without regard to its precise meaning, as we say "the sun sets," although we know it is the earth that moves. For, doubtless the knocking down of snuff-boxes is guided by necessity as much as anything else.

He was one of that class of boys who are always in a row, his pursuits were all of the daring nature ; if a couple of boys were fighting in the street he was sure to be backing one, if his father took a walk the first object he saw would be his hopeful son boxing with a black-guard boy ; was there a window broken, some missile of his had perpetrated the offence. He was a walking nuisance, his whole mind seemed devoted to the laudable purpose of tormenting his species ; at his command all the house bells in the neighbourhood would set up a peal, a blast of his breath would cause showers of peas to fall through the air, to the great annoyance of passers by. He was universally hated by the neighbours, and it argues great forbearance on their part, that they never assassinated him as an enemy to the human race ; nor even bribed a gypsy to steal him.

This hero remained long after his companions, and after having paid about twice the value of the box, he succeeded in knocking it down. We must here state that among other tastes, he was particularly fond of indulging in the various school-boy applications of gunpowder, now it struck him that his newly acquired box would be the very thing to hold gunpowder, and he accordingly had it filled, and then proceeded to school, about an hour after his time.

Here the iron, or rather the birchen rod of despotism awaited his arrival ; a friend of the schoolmaster's, one of those Argus like individuals who see every thing, had told him that he had that morning seen Master Graceless (such was the youth's name) playing at the very ungentlemanly game of "cock-shy;" this report being confirmed by his absence, the sentence of condemnation was passed before the appearance of the offender, and only waited his approach to be put in execution ; therefore, before Master Graceless had advanced many steps into the room, he felt himself seized by the arm of power, exalted on a school-fellow's back, and severely castigated without a single word being spoken. After this ceremony, he was asked "where he had been," a question, which legally, ought to have been asked before ; but as prosecutor, jury, judge and executioner, are all united in the person of a schoolmaster, such niceties are, in general, but little attended to.

"Where have you been?" demanded the pedagogue in no very gentle tone.

"No where, sir!" was the extremely natural reply.

"Why are you so late?"

"Don't know, sir."

"What have you been doing all this time?"

"Nothing, sir."

"What is that peeping out of your pocket?"

"Nothing, sir."

"If you don't pull it out directly, I'll flog you again."

This was an irresistible appeal, young Graceless, who had already begun to entertain serious doubts whether the possession of the box had added much to his happiness, slowly drew it forth.

"Now, throw that on the fire," said the schoolmaster.

"On the fire, sir! Why it is ——." He was going to unfold its contents, but the bright thought flashed across his mind, that he could,

by obeying the preceptor's command, obtain vengeance for the wrongs he had received; so without more hesitation, and with an Iago-like look, he threw the box on the fire, where it fell upon some coals not yet ignited; then, silently exulting, he walked to his seat.

Before the great earthquake at Lisbon, the weather was unusually calm, and at the period of which we are speaking, the school was unusually quiet, the boys were all remarkably attentive to their books, the cat was asleep by the fire, and the schoolmaster himself had sunk into a doze. All were unconscious of the dire event that was impending, save one; he sat in the corner, and kept casting glances at the fire-place, partly expressive of fear, and partly of fiendish, or rather impish, triumph. "Conticuere omnes."—But this did not last long; presently a report was heard in the fire-place loud enough to have awakened the dead; this was followed by a shower of coals and soot which nearly filled the room, and a fearful shattering of window panes. "It clamor," which being translated means, "the master swore," "the boys shouted," and "the cat yelled," altogether forming the most infernal compound of noise that ever tortured human ears.

And here we will close our narration, ending like most modern dramatic compositions with a "Tableau vivant;" we have illumined the stage with our red fire, and now we let fall our curtain. We, however, inform our readers that the Unlucky Snuff-box never again made its appearance on earth: and whether it was reduced to its elementary atoms, or blown up to the skies to form a malignant star may yet form a subject for the conjectures of the curious.

A NECESSARIAN.

"NATIONAL EDUCATION."

"Not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us in things that most concern
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek."

MILTON. *Paradise Lost*, b. 8.

"If the children preserved by charity were generally consigned to farmers, under stipulations for certain instructions, and not sent to schools furnishing them with a little useless learning, they would assist in producing the food they consume, more food might be produced, the industrious, the ingenious, and the learned, might be fed better and cheaper, and an useful population increased. By placing them in mechanic, mercantile, speculative, and literary classes, the relative disproportion between those who purchase, and those who furnish subsistence is continually increasing, even if the effect

should be to render them industrious; but if, as is commonly the case, they should prove idle and vicious, *charity* will have given *premiums* for the production of the most dreadful evils that can infest society.

"An English VIRGIL, at this time, would be an inestimable blessing, if he were to direct the force of his eloquence, and the charms of his poetry, to the restoration of considerable portions of the children of charitable institutions to productive labour, under certain humane regulations, to be enforced by the magistrates; and if he could render that labour honourable, by teaching the rural echos of England such strains as influenced Rome to pour its population over Italy;

" 'O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint

' Agricolas !'

"When, from the children of despair, who are educated in literature, with vague and indefinite prospects, some are preferred to dignities, some are detained by factions as advocates, some by jobbers as amusing literary gladiators, the effects on the remainder are horrible, and their vices, which may be called the vices of their country, are peculiarly malignant and incorrigible. Their injuries often amalgamate in their minds all sentiments of right and wrong; and I have seldom seen a man in distress, in consequence of disappointments in literary views, who could retain those principles, by which the unfortunate, in other distresses, either sustain their peculiar miseries or extricate themselves from them. When such persons, by satire or libel, revenge this cruel neglect, I might call it injustice, on the government that permits it, on the inattention of the opulent and great, or on the insolence of their brethren, who, by intrigue or servility, have emerged from this "slough of despair," they are corrected—I suppose they must be corrected—with a rod of iron, which may silence, or render some of them dastardly, but never has rendered them truly virtuous or happy.

" 'Give them education,' says ignorant and charitable Opulence, pointing at the squalid offspring of the famishing poor. Wisdom would say of the greater number, 'Give them nutritious food, and certain elementary instructions, and inure their bodies to labour.' They are all immured in hospitals and schools, deprived of bodily exercise, and fed sparingly, but disciplined into a wretched species of *literature*, which they are instructed to believe is a *patent* for riches and honours. With bodies rendered unfit for labour, with sedentary habits, a passion for reading, and an expectation of being provided for and distinguished, they enter the world.

"All branches of learning are made not only easy, but amusing; and the successful art of seduction, the principle of this mode of education, is that of applying perpetual stimuli to the sensibility and imagination of the child. Accordingly, every thing is taught by a story, a tale, or a romance; and the pupils, male and female, to the relief of their teachers, are speedily qualified for those great *universities* of Britain, the *Circulating Libraries*.

"I will not dwell on the enervating influence of this system of education. While courts of law are punishing vices, and declaiming on the general dereliction of moral faith and virtuous principle, they seem to me employed like the husbandman who prunes the branches, instead of pulling up the roots, of a poisonous plant. The sons and daughters of farmers and tradesmen, in these sentimental schools, by the perusal of tales for children, and the adventures of imaginary heroes and heroines, acquire a taste for romances; and when, at their own disposal, they have lost their health and all useful capacity, by the perusal of five or six thousand novels, of which the general course consists, they die of ennui, nervous atrophy, or consumption; or they become *authors*. Of all the claimants on the Literary Fund, the most numerous, and the most importunate, are the sickly spawn of this sentimental education, the male and female pupils of the *Circulating Libraries*."—*Claims of Literature*, by DAVID WILLIAMS. 1802.

A parliamentary discussion has taken place upon this subject, which terminated in a vote of a large sum of our labour's earnings to be applied towards making us a nation of scholars. The subject is one of great importance, on account of that deep-laid scheme to deceive and confuse, that wary attempt to disguise truth, that evident design of throwing dust in the eyes of the people, which marks the conduct of men the tongues of whom have been loudest in setting forth the blessings of "*National Education*." It is not in this view alone that we always regard education as a matter of *importance*: he is a barbarian indeed, nay, something more savage than the native of the uncultivated forest, who, as a politician in a civilized state, can consider the habits and dispositions of young people as a matter unworthy of solicitude. But our attention, at this moment, is attracted by something more than the ordinary necessity which involves a due care for the minds of every rising generation: the voice of the schemer, the disguiser, the thrower of dust, is what just now calls upon us; it calls out in the specific name of "*National Education*;" and the nation, attentive to its own concerns, naturally inquires, "what is this—and what is it intended to *effect* in our behalf?"

It is not because the people have already been openly and most shamefully deserted by men professing the greatest concern for their education, that we are disposed to differ with others of honest principle with respect to this point. If the cause have been abandoned by some who were thought to be at once the ablest and the heartiest of its friends, that, to be sure, is no argument against the cause itself: we view the matter precisely in the same light as we did years ago, at the time when "*Mechanics Institutes*" and "*Mechanic's Magazines*" were first brought into play for the special purposes intended by their projectors, and when the whole welkin of politics resounded with orations in promise of the independance and the prosperity that were to be derived from such things.

Admitting all the importance of this subject, for that particular reason above stated, we ask, as not a few of the nation do,—what is *meant* by this scheme of "*National Education*;" what is it to *do* for us? *Education* has been defined as the *formation of manners in youth*. The manners must of course depend upon the kind of instruction which is applied in their formation. Of no trifling consequence is it what those manners are to be; no question of *bagatelle* is that of what course of instruction should be applied! Our national educators

have, however, like all theorists upon other subjects, so defined the thing they treat of as to make its nature best suit their own peculiar scheme; and the schemers, whether truly the friends or the foes of the people, have reduced *education* into a system of teaching rising generations to read and to write and to make calculations upon paper. The ability to do these is what they denominate *knowledge*. "Knowledge," say they, "is power;" repeating the words of a writer who was a remarkable instance of the abuse as well as of the use of that which he rightly said knowledge gave. Now, if we were to set ourselves in opposition to the distributing of power among the "lower orders," we should be unworthy of that popularity which we wish to deserve. But to deserve is not merely to aim at; and if there be some in whose opinion we may lose by not applauding the scheme, we shall, in order to be deserving of something better, readily forfeit their good opinion and say to the schemers—"If you are in pursuit of the right object, you are, nevertheless, upon a scent that will not lead you to it."

There are the *false* and the *true*. The means to be adopted to the end is the same with both; and with both the *professed* object in view is the same. That object, proposed to be attained by the means of reading and writing and casting up accounts, is, to give us more power of doing well; to place all men, as far as possible, on the same footing; to promote an approach to equality in our condition; to prevent the encroachments of the greater upon the smaller. That this is the real object of the *false*, we need hardly say it is a falsehood to assert. Yet this, we really believe, is the object of a great many, the sincerity of whose intentions is above suspicion. The nation has become miserable under an odious load of burdens; the people's habits of life, their very moral character, have been changed by it; those who would have been happy are wretched, and those who ought to have flourished by honest industry have exhibited examples of idleness, fraud, and degrading punishment. For these evils it is that a *cause* has been in request round and round about through all the mazes of our new condition. The schemers of the *false* have devised every way of accounting for such effects that artful deception or blundering insincerity could hit on. Their main endeavour has been to parry off all reproach to themselves. Oh! lucky thought was that of our dearest friends, the "*liberals*," who discovered that the cause of the people's bad fortune was the people's own "ignorance," and that

if we suffered great unhappiness it was only for want of *knowing how* to enjoy the means of being happy! and lucky enemies have we, when they see that our friends are so friendly to them; aye, blessed nation is this, the friends and foes of which can agree so cordially together, and hug each other in the philosophical reflection, that, if we are indeed a poor set of suffering creatures, we are too near the brutes in understanding to have been worthy of a better lot!

To say that there is any want of intelligence in the country is not less wild than it would be to say that there is a redundancy of education. The latter assertion, let it be observed, is by no means of *our* suggesting; for it has been made already, and by not a few of those who have, naturally, been perplexed in viewing that increase of misery and crime which treads upon the heels of the schoolmaster. We remember to have travelled, some short time since, in a coach coming from a country town at about forty miles from London, and to have talked upon the subject of "*national education*" with a gentleman, a passenger, and a resident of that town. His opinions were inclined to what some would call "illiberal," because he seemed to question the blessings held out by our friends the schemers. Therewas, however, something worth attending to in the facts that he related. His arguments against the scheme might perhaps have been over borne by the logic of persons who had seen less of its effects than himself. But *he* told us what he had *witnessed*. It is the province of the schemers to dictate to the "ignorant" with a presumption which sets all *seeing*, as ground of *belief*, quite aside. "There are the Misses *****," said our fellow-passenger, "at *****: they have a school between them, and I am sure I do not know what good the girls are to get by it. One would think it must be good to give all the people some education. But I doubt how that is to be done. I asked one of those girls, the daughter of one of my men, as I saw her standing at the door reading a novel; well, Sally, what are you going to be, a cook or a housemaid? 'Oh, not either, sir,' said she: 'our ladies are going to send *me* to Miss — in London, because they think my *education* is good enough for a lady's maid,' and so," continued this man of plain experience, "it is with them all: they think nothing about *work* after they have got a little *scholarship* in their heads; and nothing is good enough for them but going up to town, and having fine places with little to do in them."

To speak thus is called by the schemers *illiberal*; to advertize *Cobbett's Mag.*—Vol. II. No. 9.

for servants who can *neither read nor write*, as we have seen it done in the newspapers; to prefer the services of people ignorant in such matters, as we know a great many masters and mistresses now do; this is called *illiberal*. And why so? Do our friends the "liberals" mean that it is wishing to deny something to the people which is sure to benefit all who obtain it? Yes: they assert that education (that is, in their sense, *literature*, or, the blotting of paper and the comprehending of what is meant by the blots); they boldly assert that this is a benefit to mankind, a **BLESSING**. Now, we need not go so far as to say, though we are certainly of the opinion, that it is a **CURSE**. But we will submit the question to the advocates of "National Education," whether literature be not rather a harm than a good: we will put this question for them to answer at their leisure, calling upon them, at the same time, to make out their own *case* if they can, to *prove* the existence of any blessings to mankind that may have had their origin in blottings of paper.

We beg our readers to observe the importance of the question here put and of the proof required. **SOCRATES** said, that "though no man presumes to teach a trade he has not himself learned, yet every man is prompt to give lessons upon the hardest trade of all, that of government." How true is this, how exactly exemplified at this day in most of those whose feelings are interested in designs for the mischief or dreams for the benefit of England. Some of our lecturers upon the hardest trade of all, are quite impatient at the thought that their own cleverness should be matter of doubt. It is enough with the men of education panacea that they have pronounced it a *sine qua non* and a *blessing*, that they have reproached as "ignorant," without qualifying the term, all who cannot read or write; it is enough for them that *they* have dared to do this, to make them indignant when their dogmas are opposed. Hence the mode in which the subject has been debated in the House of Commons, where, to have treated the matter properly, that *question* and that *proof* above mentioned ought to have been entertained and called for. The schemers, in their ardour to forward their scheme, seem never to have stopped a moment to think what it *is* that they have laid their hands on as the instrument of accomplishing their aims. The jocular speech of a gallant officer is a sample by which to judge of that looseness which pervades their doctrines. The honourable member who writes the *Register* had been contending that universal reading and writing was not so neces-

sary as some suppose ; upon which Colonel EVANS's felicity of thought suggested the question of—*what use the Register would be if there were none to understand its contents?* A rather smart idea ; yet, rather a shallow one. We will do Colonel EVANS the justice to be bound for him, that if he had never been a braver warrior than he is a sound politician, if his commanders had never seen his deserts more clearly than he could see the merits of this subject, he would not now have been Colonel EVANS. Speeches like that of Colonel EVANS would apply to *swords* as well as to *pens* ; and, arguing in so abstract a way as this, we should soon discern that the business of spilling human blood on the fields of the innocent and that of making ink-marks upon paper were equally praiseworthy by the same course of reasoning. For our parts, we are as little disposed to countenance the art of the one as that of the other : we question the intrinsic value of *writing* as much as that of *fighting*. We challenge both the writer and the fighter to shew in what their callings are of use. They can answer the challenge we know : but how ? The one would say—*"I was not the originator of letters. I had no hand in beginning the differences of mankind upon paper. I found men already writing and reading ; some writing to do harm and others injured by reading. I found sense led astray by error. Pens, ink, and paper were already here ; the materials for the work were in vogue , the work was going on, the motive for action already existed in necessity : as it was with POPE, so it is with me."*

"Fools rush into my head, and so I write."

"And I," the gallant Colonel would say, *"I was not the projector of weapons deadly to man. I found ready-made swords, and men engaged in wars against and in defence of liberty and justice. I took the side of the defence ; and it was necessary to commit slaughter by attack in order to succeed in defending."* Plausible, indeed, are these reasons, as far as they go. Very good excuses for the *artists* ; but, merely for themselves, and nothing in favour of their *arts*. As relates to the primary point at issue, the BLESSING or CURSE, they leave all still open to dispute.

Perhaps we go too far in forbearance towards the name of literature in placing these two, the pen and the sword, on a footing. Perhaps we ought rather to say that though, at first sight, the sword appears to be the more pernicious artifice, it is not so in fact. It becomes none but Scotch economists, and those Englishmen who have caught

their distemper, to come to hasty conclusions upon matters so serious. There are, however, reasons which strongly urge us to conclude that the origin of letters is not only not the happiest event in the history of our species, but that man's invention in this instance has effected the greatest injury that was ever attributed to his own ingenuity. It is universally admitted that happiness depends on liberty; even tyrants themselves contend for their right to govern by asserting that their slaves are free; no despot, however absolute, but insists that the state he rules enjoys all the benefits of true republic; there are no politicians, whatever their creed, who do not admit that if nature's benefits were more equally distributed, we should have better cause to be content; no man denies that the progress of luxury on the one hand, and of destitution on the other throughout communities, has been occasioned by the operation of art in thrusting nature aside: and, then, if it be to that *art* that results so pest-like to society are owing, what shall be said of *literature*, how shall we estimate the abstract blessing of a *blot*, while agreeing, as every one must, that of all arts that of letters is the most refined? Most refined undoubtedly; because most difficult; and *because* most difficult, necessarily most subtle in the hands of such as can bring it to bear, most full of dangers in its influence over the lot of those, the great majority of mankind, who have to rely on common sense alone for protection against the stratagems of extraordinary cunning.

What have been the *effects* of the blotting art, to make us regard it as essentially *good*. As a thing affecting our political condition, as a shaper of moral conduct, as a source of delight to man, what do we see to convince us that it is a *blessing*? We see History, at every turn, so foully betraying Truth, that the records of fact in mere *blot* are no more than smouldering embers to keep alive the spark of dissension. To oppose each other's designs, we pit against one another the various statements and opinions handed down by *blot* from antiquity, and, while assuming that, by this means, we can see clearly into the reality of things at the greatest distance, we are deceived every day as to the nature of what arises close around us by the misrepresentations of our fellow lookers-on. No deed can be done, but the dealer in news lays hold of it, distorts it or glosses it over; and before twenty-four hours have succeeded the event, hundreds of men, living not a mile from the scene of action, are made to believe in what never was. It is one of the blessings of *blot* (properly so called,

recollect ; for, from *blotting* or *staining* the term *letter* is derived) ; it is one of the blessings of this contrivance, that ministers of state are enabled to dictate thoughts which they know to be unjust, and to produce effect by promulgating them without incurring the odium of the authorship. One of the blessings, that the conspirators of faction can write and distribute pamphlets, make up and send forth reports, concoct and insert paragraphs, without its being known that it is *they* who are at work. One of the blessings, that man is enabled to assume forms most peculiarly unmanly ; that, while to distinguish himself from all other animals, he boasts the character of raising his countenance towards the stars, he is brought, by the means of *blot*, to meet truth with shamefacedness, and to oppose the wills of the rest of his kind by a mode of approach in which they shall neither see his looks, hear his voice, nor be aware of his presence. One of the blessings, that the manner of inculcating " political economy " is no more than an improvement on a pagan imposture ; that, as the priests of the temple of *Isis* used to deliver oracles in the name of their goddess through a hole from behind her statue, so now a petitcoat is made use of to disguise the real actors in that officina from which come " illustrations " to teach Englishmen to submit to oppression and to be happy in living under it ! Will they tell us, further, of the blessings of the art of blotting as regards other sciences : will they invite us to think of mathematics, chemistry, and the rest, as aided by literature ? Let them. But let them, while applauding navigation by steam-boats, and the cooking of potatoes with steam-kettles, and the feeding of men upon physic, also think of nations falling into weakness, of Irish labourers starving for want of food, and of gunpowder, bullets and canon-balls, and the " Holy Alliance."

As to *morality*, and the idea that those who are not skilled in blotting are *therefore* less honest than those who know the art : there is but one way of meeting a proposition so detestable, that of giving it the only name which is worthy of the motive of him who first suggested the idea. It is *false*. If it be not enough, as it ought, to point to the great mass of crime committed by the higher orders of the people, knowing, as all do, that among those orders are to be found a considerable portion of the most atrocious criminals ; if this were not enough, what do we want more than the fact, that every sane man, lettered or unlettered, knows that there is a difference between right and wrong ? The schemers violently insist, that to be

unlettered is to be ignorant and vicious ; and with good reason ; because the fate of their scheme depends upon this. They seem to suppose that none but the blotting and the knowing in blots can be truly good. They seem to have forgotten that bare precepts on paper are not actual examples, that signs in words are not the substance of things. They seem to have lost all sight of the use of tongues between parent and child, and of one neighbour's conduct for another to imitate or to avoid. Is that which they call "learning" the conferrer of wise heads and charitable hearts ? *That* they cannot help asserting, for their doctrine drives them straight to it. Whence, then, all those superlative indiscretions and corruptions that belong to men of what the schemers call "learning ?" Are the judgments of men sounder, are their dispositions more just, exactly in proportion as they have written or read numbers of books ? No, no ; this can hardly be contended. What, then, becomes of the confused idea entertained by the schemers as to ignorance of letters being the cause of immoral behaviour ?

That literature is a source of *delight* there can be no doubt ; so is every luxury : that it is a necessary of life is also true, so far as *fashion* is concerned, like any other thing. Carriages and four, services of silver and of gold, rose-wood tables and chairs, dresses of broad-cloth and of satin, highly-seasoned dishes, distilled liquors, tobacco and opium ; these are all both pleasant and necessary from fashion. And precisely the same are articles of "education" with those who are the favourites of fortune : they, also, are matters of mere fashion, as much as are shapes in coats, gowns, hats, and bonnets. The gentlemen are not a bit less fastidious than the ladies, with the latter of whom you see METASTASIO succeed to the "*Good Housewife's Companion*," the piano to the harpsicord, the guitar to the piano, and "*Di tanti palpiti*" to "*Johnny's so long at the fair*." But it by no means follows that the "luxury of thought," of which our *literati* are so fond, should be what it now is. *Thought* was never found in a bottle of ink : orations and poems were made before the art of blotting was known. If literature be now connected with any thing that was always inseparable from the nature of man, what was that but something which man could have enjoyed quite as well separated from literature ? Who shall say, that if the words of THEOCRITUS and VIRGIL had been imprinted only on the leaves of the trees, and had dropped with the leaves into decay, it might not

have been better, than that they should be preserved by an invention which immortalizes poets who become the flatterers of corruption from motives of lucre, like the parrot or the jack-daw which says his "*how d'y do*" because he expects to get something to eat by it?*

To such reflections as these it is that a question like that of Colonel EVANS must lead. Were literature something in its own nature rendering it a fountain of incorruptible good, the case would be very different: but it is not so. "But, say the schemers, we *have* the art, it *exists*; we cannot help using it, and we must make the best of it that we can." True: so far they are practical. But what means our friend the *True Sun*, in what he said on the 20th of August last:—

"As we hold ignorance to be the source of crime, we would have every man even *compelled* to ensure to his child whatever amount of necessary knowledge it might be capable of receiving. Every man has a right to claim of the state that amount of instruction, which is essential to his own true happiness and social security; and on the other hand, society has a right to demand, that every man shall be compelled to qualify himself, so far as in him lies, for the fit and responsible discharge of his duties to the community."

What means THE AUTHOR OF PELHAM, who, in his "*England and the English*," recommends the labouring people to imitate the "clubs" of the noblemen and gentlemen of St. James's Street and Pall Mall; which, in his opinion, are calculated to "counteract the solitary disposition of the natives," "rub off prejudices," "further the growth of public principle like the discussion of public matters," and "unbend the mind while improving it:" what kind of *unbending* and *improving*, what mode of counteracting *solatariness* must that be which is looked for by a man who winds up his recommendation in the following strain?—

"If the experiment were made by the middle and lower classes in a provincial town, it could not fail of success; and among its *advantages* would be the *check to early and imprudent marriages*, and the *growth of that sense of moral dignity* which is ever produced by a perception of the *higher comforts of life*."

- * Quis expedit psittaco suum χαῖρε,
- Picasque docuit verba nostra conari?
- Magister artis, ingenique largitor
- Venter, negatas artifex sequi voces.
- Quod si dolosi spes refulserit nummi,
- Corvos poetas, et poetrias picas
- Cantare credas Pegaseum melos.

PERSIUS.

What means that "liberal" of Edinburgh, who hangs out the sign of the *Lord Brougham's Head*, and who says :—

"When we have heard manufacturers complaining of the *turbulence* of their men, we have asked them, which they found the most difficult to deal with, the men who read, or the men who don't read? The answer has uniformly been, both are troublesome, but the *ignorant* are the most *dangerous*. 'The reading men are always agitating, but we know what the *end* of their agitation is likely to be; we know the lengths they will go, and how they will go, and where they will *stop*; but the *ignorant*, when once set in motion, are like *infuriated animals*; there is no reckoning on their actions, or any considerations that may *check* them.'"

Here is confusion for you! here's a jumble of political wisdom, morality, and love of justice! It must all, however, be taken in one heap, for it is all belonging to the great *scheme*. Look at the *checks* to be effected by the means of the *compulsion* needful, and say, if we owe the communication of such thoughts as are here put forth to literature, whether literature be a BLESSING or a CURSE.

Go, men who talk of a "social system," and who, at the same time, deny the words of God himself that "it is not good that the man should be alone;" go, men "having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry;" go, men the friends of the "*Factory System*," who would check the turbulences of rebellion to such things, who call working men infuriated animals when they insist that "the labourer is worthy of his hire," and who would check the course of necessity by your own rebellions against human nature; go, visionary sleep-walkers in the march of intellect, who think to arrive quickest at the object of your journey by taking the longest road, and who would accomplish that equality you seek by first raising all mankind to a level in that very art in which it is most difficult for them to become alike; go, schemers of every degree of audacity or crotchet; go to those to whom you owe every morsel of bread that you put in your mouths and every thread that covers your backs; look them in the face; tell them that it is good that working men should learn to be patient in misery while they see idlers fattening on the fruits of their earnings; tell them that a wife is a thing of less use to a man than a bundle of books upon Scotch Economy, tell them that checking marriage is advantageous, because marriage is inconsistent with a sense of moral dignity and not one of the "higher comforts of life;" tell them, that it is just that they should be *compelled* to be taught this, and that those who have not been blessed with the necessary course of instruction ought to be presumed to be the least

worthy of respect, the most liable to error, the most savage, vicious, and inhuman of men ; tell them these things, and make them *believe* what you say (which, blessed be common sense in spite of *blot* ! you never can) and then we will not only agree with the Frenchman who says that man is the most foolish animal, but even with him, whoever he be, of the *Chronicle*, who has asserted that the lower orders of the people of this country are of " recent civilization," " ill-educated," " grossly ignorant," and " beastly."

" Make the best of it" ? to be sure we must. But not by bringing every thing else of greater intrinsic value into comparative disrepute. Not by forcing into practice the least practicable of all things. Ought the means of livelihood to be distributed as fairly as possible among the earners of it ; is this the grand desideratum to be effected ? Is the knowledge of what is most clearly our due the most necessary knowledge ? If it be so, we already have that knowledge in abundance : indeed we have, schemers, hard as it is for you to believe ; and we are not content that that simple power of distinguishing between right and wrong which common sense already possesses, should be laid on the shelf 'till you have brought your literary scheme to such perfection, as that no man can deceive any other man with words. The fact is, that these schemers are people who do not know or associate with the people over whom they wish to exercise their compulsion. They live at a distance from them, and are as ignorant of their abilities and their deserts as they are of their wants. We should like to see the effect which would be produced by all those whose labours can be least dispensed with at once throwing up, and saying to the idlers—" try your skill in our way." Vastly amusing would it be to see the wise acres of the educating school display their ignorance of things the most necessary for man to learn. Fancy what kind of cultivation the earth would receive from *them*, what application *they* would make of labour in the most useful art, what harvests might be expected from sowings of *theirs*. Fancy ! but you must fancy something more than heathen indeed as the result, if, for only one season, real useful knowledge were to deliver us up to the management of so helpless a set. How soon would they be glad to change places again, and promise to say nothing more about " ignorance !" Pretty feedings and rearings of cattle ! pretty tendings of flocks ! pretty ups and downs and notchings and botchings with the plough in the hands of the " learned" ! Talk of merry-Andrews, talk of shows at a fair....save

your money, good folks who love the marvellous, for something more out of the way in ignorant man than is to be found in the intelligence of brutes and insects ; lavish not you wealth upon " Toby the learned pig " and " the industrious fleas ; " but rather pay a shilling to be indulged with the bare idea, if you can only conceive it, of that figure which a couple of the diffusion society would make on a barn's floor when thumping their own heads with a flail for want of *knowing* better, or, of how the shear-editor of the *Penny Magazine* would mangle mutton and wool by trying to shear a sheep !

Those who cannot read have not been a bit more deceived by a taxed press than those who can. A shameful contempt is that which is now entertained for the sense of the working. They have, after all, been driven to fall back upon the resources of their own natural understandings for defence. They know the wrongs they suffer ; they know that they do not deserve them. If they are reproached as turbulent and infuriated, it is a part of their really useful knowledge that there was good reason to make them so, and it becomes their task-masters, after hearing Lord GREY say that the people should act " like men who knew their rights, and knowing dare maintain, against the threats of power, and the blandishments of corruption," to remember, that while the means of paying enormous taxes are afforded by the unlearned, it is their spirit alone which has effected a Reform that was to relieve us of such burdens. Our friend the *True Sun*, more especially, should call to mind, that if he doubts whether the " ignorant " know best what suits them, he is entirely indebted to them for his coming forth to tell us that much.

SEAMEN'S NIGHT-SONG.

Oh, 'tis sweet to be
 On the midnight sea
 When the Sun to his golden rest has hied,
 And the Moon by night,
 In her silvery light,
 Shines down o'er the ever-trembling tide.
 When the Mariner's song
 Floats lightly along
 On the night-breeze's wing o'er the sea,
 And the blue waves vie
 With the clear blue sky
 As they mingle their tides far away.

When the sea-fowl's cry,
As she slow flaps by,
And the fall of the glancing oar—
And the lazy lash
Of the billow's dash
As it foams on the sounding shore—
Come trembling round
In softened sound,
Till, blent with magic pow'r,
Sweet Music floats
In airy notes
Round the soul in that lonely hour.
While Fancy wakes,
And Nature speaks,
Mid beauties that never can sleep—
While the sons of day
Are dead to her lay,
We woo her by night o'er the deep.
'Tis the mystic hour,
When in coral bow'r
The sea-spirit's chanting below,
Mid the caves that are piled
With green waves wild—
In silence we list as we go.
We rest on our oar
'Till her song no more
Resounds o'er the swelling sea ;
Then we shiver the light
Of the moonbeam bright,
With our oars keeping time to our lay.
If yon world of light
Through its portals bright
Leads the spirit of man into bliss,
Where the blue arch sinks low
To the waves below
Is surely the passage from this.
Then away, away,
Ere morning's ray
Bid the joys that we cherish to cease—
Ere the Triton tell
Night's last hour on his shell
We may moor in the waters of peace.

J. F. W.

THE LECTURE.

AN INCIDENT OF A LIFE.

" Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

To me one of the most delicious incentives to unabating exertion, is to hear the laurel crowned in art or science, recount what motives, what inducements stimulated them on to—

" Climb
The steep where fame's proud temple shines afar,"

And the gratification afforded me by these recitals, is in proportion as the difficulties overcome have appeared insurmountable. Now my friend M—n has long waged war with penury, and felt the influence of malignant stars, but genius and industry have raised him to the very pinnacle of success. In him, therefore, I love to trace the springs of action, and learn the causes, both of sentiment and conduct, which have contributed towards producing such magnificent results. I know none worthier; that "he is a great man," has passed the lips of all who have seen his works: that he is a good man is engraven on the hearts of all who know him. I admired the genius ere I knew the man, and the hope of making his acquaintance was a strong stimulus to my exertions; now I know him I esteem him, (I cannot say how highly,) and listen to his words as the young men listened to the counsels of the wise and persevering Job—nor is he chary of inculcating those lessons of experimental wisdom, which he has so well learned in the school of adversity.

My friend, M—n, delights to ramble over green fields to luxuriate in the beauties of nature, but a double pleasure is their's who accompany him: unseen beauties are pointed out, and combined imagination bodies forth the forms of things, and the glowing enthusiasm of the poet and painter, gives them a lovely, as well as a local habitation, and a name; is it not natural then that a mind full of hope *to do*, should be anxious to know the sources of power, and that curiosity should seek the cause? In answer to one of my enquiries about early inducements, my friend M—n related to me the following anecdote:—

" Poverty and its consequent miseries, under any circumstances, excite the sensitive mind, but our sympathies seem most deeply affected when the object sported with by fortune once enjoyed and seems worthy of a better fate. My early years were attended with a succession of obstructions; I saw those around me steeped in poverty to the very lips, but none of the numerous scenes of distress and misery I have witnessed, ever left a more lasting impression upon my mind than the fate of the poor lecturer.

" I had often heard my brother Richard speak in the most unmeasured raptures of admiration of Mr. Wilton as a man of vast acquirements, as a philosopher, poet, orator, historian, in short as a

man of universal genius and learning, and as I entertained a high opinion of his judgment, I felt a strong desire to see this second Creighton, you will believe, therefore, that I was not a little delighted at being called upon one evening to accompany Richard to a lecture on poetry, to be delivered by Mr. Wilton.

"On our way to the lecture-room, Richard gave me to understand, that I must not expect to see either a superbly decorated hall or a very fashionable audience, for Mr. Wilton had fallen somewhat into the rear of fortune of late, and all his struggles had hitherto been unavailing to advance him—in short, the room had been hired for that evening for a small sum of money, although it was the whole produce of the sale of the only earthly remaining valuable which Mr. Wilton possessed; it was a token of love from his esteemed Eliza, a bible, since rendered more precious to him from containing the genealogy of his youthful family in the manuscript of his beloved wife.

"Upon our arrival at the place of destination, the outer door was opened by a slender youth, clean in his appearance, and sensibly polite in his address, one of the sons, as Richard informed me, of Mr. Wilton; he had conducted us through a long passage, and having ascended a flight of narrow steps, we found ourselves in a spacious room, which was abundantly supplied with benches, and dimly lit up by a few candles, placed in the most advantageous situations, about the further end, near where the pulpit or rather desk for the orator was placed. Eight o'clock was the appointed time for the lecturer to make his bow, but that hour was already passed, and not a single other visitor had arrived, although the price of admission was a mere trifle.

"There is something very damping to the spirits in a thinly attended lecture room; our sympathies work reflexly, and are busily, if unconsciously, at play with and for the lecturer. By my brother's manner I saw he was not much disappointed, and to wile away the long minutes of waiting, he began to tell me a portion of his friend's history. Mr. Wilton had been educated at the university of Oxford, and had left that scene of his pride and fame full of spirits and high feeling; elated with love and hope he had married soon after leaving college, and a youthful helpless family had held him in one continuous struggle for subsistence. Mr. Wilton had, with much ado, been able to live and live (to use a common phrase,) but from hand to mouth, this lecture was an effort *in extremis*, an effort to keep his wretched family as long as possible at least, sheltered from the pitiless elements. From the necessities arising out of a protracted illness of his wife, other resources had been exhausted, and his rent had grown into considerable arrear. The few articles which had remained from former shocks, had been parted with from day to day to supply a scanty meal of the coarsest food. Mr. Wilton had hit upon this method of reviving his finances; he fancied it a lucky thought, and hoped to realize his wish from the results of a public lecture. He had made some sacrifices to publish his intention, and had taken every means in his power to insure a full attendance; but alas!

"Who can control his fate."

Half an hour had now transpired; we began to exhibit marks of mis-

giving about the success of Mr. Wilton's enterprize, the door opened, and a single person entered; this was an old friend and school-fellow as he informed us of Mr. Wilton's who had been invited by him to attend the lecture. Our conversation ceasing, we began to grow somewhat fidgetty. At length the door again opened, and Mr. Wilton appeared; a charm of gentility so thoroughly pervaded his air and gesture, that you saw not the shabbiness of his apparel; his age I considered to be about fifty, but his hair had long since been grey. Although his countenance was strongly marked with care, there was so much openness and honesty in it, that you would have felt your natural tribute of veneration unthinkingly elicited; he passed us on his way to the desk with a firm step, though he appeared wholly absorbed in thought, I fancied he acknowledged, with a slight inclination of the head, the recognition of his friendly visitors.

He ascended the rostrum; after some moments suspense, I looked into his countenance, my heart beat, and my spirit sank within me; poor fellow, thought I, he has set his all upon a cast, and the prize is not sufficiently large to remunerate him for the small scroll upon which he has written his lecture. I turned to Richard; he was holding down his head, I saw he was already sensibly affected. The lecturer had not yet ventured an utterance, he was struggling to do so, and filled up the interval with attempting to accommodate to his satisfaction the manual which he held upon his desk. I fancied I saw him weak and sinking, I fixedly observed him; another moment and the struggle was over; subdued nature gave way in a half suppressed convulsion, which he had been striving with all his energies, physical and moral, to conquer! His last effort seemed to show a desire to hide his grief and shame; he buried his face in his hands, and fell where he stood—powerless, senseless.

"It was a considerable time before we could restore him; when he had recovered his senses, we assisted in leading him to his home, where we beheld a scene of wretchedness which can never be erased from my memory. The partners of his sufferings, his wife and children, were anxiously awaiting their father's return provided with food to satisfy their craving; they flew to the opening door, all demanding, in language suited to their several ages, the food which their papa had brought them; they had not in their first transports beheld him pale and trembling, which on perceiving, their implorings were immediately turned into tears and caresses. A parent, who has been compelled to answer the hungry yearnings of his loved offspring with excuses, can alone feel justly the bitterness of Mr. Wilton's condition: never did I feel so severely as upon this occasion the misery of being unable to afford relief to my suffering fellow creatures! all the way home I was sorely troubled in heart, I could not sleep; I pictured to myself a similar fate. If I was disappointed of the lecture on poetry, I received from this scene, although an awful, a much more useful, lesson: I was then very young, and struggling hard with adversity, and if the hopes and fears ingendered by this incident alone, were not sufficient invectives to enable me to come off victor, they considerably accelerated the conquest.

"I was not a little surprised at receiving a visit from the poor

gentleman a few days after this occurrence. He had called he said to apologize to me for his conduct, he had been accustomed to disappointments, and it was not so much the loss he had sustained by the failure of his scheme which so deeply affected him, as the thoughts of the state in which he had left his poor wife and children, whose condition and sufferings obtruded themselves upon him, and he could not with all his philosophy, dismiss the picture.

I endeavoured to console him as well as I was able, but I here again felt the sting arising from the conscious inability to afford any substantial relief. Alas! "my good young friend," said Mr. Wilton, "my own indiscretion has brought all my afflictions upon me; I have been more imprudent than unfortunate. The great error of my life has been, that I have always been making attempts, forming projects, without prosecuting any design to a practical termination; always if I may say so, beginning life. I have been a man in the world without a purpose: born with some blandishing prospects, I was exalted beyond my proper sphere, my vanity was flattered; I soon conceived my talents were very considerable, and hoped and thought they would always provide for me in emergencies; with this ill-founded confidence I married very young, and lost my fellowship annuity at the time I most required it. I had to provide for others before I could by any definite means support myself; my family increasing soon compelled me to dispose of the residue of my paternal fortune, which when I had disbursed I found myself totally destitute; thus did I by this act of early imprudence involve in my own wretched fate that of an innocent and deserving creature, and have lived to see a guiltless family reared amid dissolution and despair. This act my young friend I consider the worst of my life, and the kind manner in which my Eliza bears her destiny has rather increased than alleviated my sufferings."

"Mr. Wilton departed, I saw him no more, but the memory of his fate will never be erased from my mind; his words fixed themselves indelibly on my heart. "I have been a man without a purpose," these words seemed still to vibrate in my ears, at times reproachingly, sometimes as a salutary warning.

"It is impossible to say," added my friend M—n, the extent of benefit I derived from this early lesson. When disappointments and crosses have perplexed me so that my energies have begun to relax; suddenly I have thought of Mr. Wilton; when I have been puffed up with an overfraught fancy to reach beyond natural powers or temperate judgment, Mr. Wilton has recurred to my thoughts; whenever I felt that I was blindly disregarding a fixed aim, I have recollected the words of Mr. Wilton; and providence has hitherto averted the anticipated dangers."

Mr. Wilton is long since where the weary are at rest: but daily experience among men must impress on us the melancholy conviction, that the unhappy infirmity of which poor Mr. Wilton was the victim, is not extinct, but is frequently to be met with in men least deficient in natural ability, who are nevertheless going through life without any direction or purpose.

"The Reform Ministry, and the Reformed Parliament,"
Third edition. London, 1833. p. p. 108.

"Now, my dear fellow citizens, how is it possible you can conceive, that any person, who holds an office of some hundred pounds a year, which may be taken from him whenever power shall think fit, will, if he should be chosen a member for any city, do the last thing when he sits in the house, that he knows or fears may be displeasing to those who gave him, or continue him in that office?"

SWIFT. *Advice to the Freemen of Dublin.*

Under the above title a pamphlet has been published, and has, in a very short space of time, gone through three editions. It is much talked of and is generally thought to be the production of some, or one, of the ministry, or of some one very nearly connected with them. It is divided into subjects as follows :

"IRELAND.
"SLAVERY.
"FINANCE.
"BANK CHARTER.
"TRADE.

"LAW.
"CORPORATIONS.
"SCOTLAND.
"POOR LAWS.
"FOREIGN POLICY."

and the strong suspicion that it comes from a minister or a minister's tool, seems to be grounded on the fact, that it abounds so much in official detail that none but such a man *could* write it, and so much in panegeric, and (where occasion required it) perversion of fact, that none but such a man *would* write it. We confess ourselves, notwithstanding, pleased that the pamphlet should have appeared ; for, both in the circumstance itself, as well as in the little practical part of it, the title-page, we find a becoming deference to the public which it has not fallen to the lot of the English nation to receive from its governors for many generations. The "*Reform Ministry*" ! This identification with "*Reform*," (not "*moderate Reform*"), but with Reform without qualification, is paying a deference to the public that we could not have expected in 1833 from a ministry a part of which joined the ministry of Mr. CANNING in 1828, who came into power pledging himself to resist reform to the last hour of his life, let it come in what shape it might ! It is deference to the English public, then, that makes the ministry chase the word "*Reform*" on its own trumpet, and, therefore, we are pleased with signal. But, if called on to admit that the present ministry have a right to assume the title of *reformers*, *con amore*, we need only point to their conduct above-alluded to, and to their subsequent declaration that the people wanted no Reform ; to the equivocating conduct in the bringing in of the Bill of reform, and to the strange paltering with the Bill itself when it was before the country ; we need only do these, surely, and remind our readers of the constant watching, the tip-toe anxiety, of the public, during the whole progress of this Bill, to warrant us in denying that this particular set of men ought to be designated as a cabinet of Reformers. Indeed, while we must grant that they were *agents* in the work of Reform, we are compelled to disallow, that, in fact, they are either the primary

or the essential agents in that work : in casting back for these, we find them in the long list of persecuted victims of the last century, and not one of whom is in the present ministry ; and the essential promoters of Reform in the year 1830 (the year when it came) were undoubtedly those who then pronounced their anathema against any Reform. No man pretends to doubt that the DUKE of WELLINGTON did more for Reform in his speech at the opening of the Session of 1830, than the Whigs had ever done for it : he gave union and life to the whole nation by the words which he pronounced on that occasion ; and men found themselves in such a perfect unison of thought upon that point, that thought soon became action, and action would have been carried to an irretrievable length if the Duke had not retired and let in the Whigs. The Duke, then, was the efficient reformer ; and those who tumbled almost headlong into his place were not reformers because they then gave the nation Reform. When a man flounders into a river, we don't call him a *fish* because we see him swim ! We know that he would *walk* if he could, but we also know that he can't ; and so the Whigs would have declared to us still that the people did not want reform, but they had tumbled into deep water and were compelled, *nolens volens*, to strike out or sink. So much for their pretensions.

Another feature of this Treasury trumpet, is, the most abundant, obsequious flattery of the members of the House of Commons. It finds then "gentlemen," men of discretion, men of talent and independence, and it indirectly applauds even, and finds virtue in, those *brayings* and *cock-crowings* which shocked every body who heard of them. It constantly speaks of it as the "*Reformed House*," as if, by this constant repetition, to make us rest satisfied without further Reforms. But, not to go into an examination of the conduct of the House, which would open too wide a field, let us examine one of its last returns, and try its *independence* by one of its own documentary confessions. On the 22nd February, 1833, an order was made by the House for a return of the "number of members of both Houses of Parliament, who hold office, place or emolument under the crown or public offices, &c., and the amount of salary and allowances" &c. This return was made on the 15th August, and it shows that there are in this "*Reformed House*" no less than 124 members holding office or place, of *emolument*, and that, amongst them, these 124 receive yearly the sum of 105,567*l.* It is more, indeed, for neither the Attorney General nor the Solicitor have put the probable or average amount of their income from their respective offices, but have made this return : "*No salary. Fees uncertain.*" There are also many members, such as Lords Lieutenant, who hold offices of great power, and who are not among the 124, but whose places are held at the will of the ministry notwithstanding. The sum, if we divide it by the number of members, 658, would give to each man in the House, somewhere about 160*l.* a-year. So that, this "*reformed House*" is not so immaculate even in the matter of direct dependency. *One hundred and twenty-four* men paid yearly out of the taxes is a formidable body to be placed in that very House which gives or denies taxes ! It would probably be seen, if the calculation

could be made, that on an average of nights in the Session, the bulk of the money is voted by considerably less than two hundred members; and, this being the case, what chance is there for the people, when this phalanx of one hundred and twenty-four form a part of that two hundred? We believe we are far above the mark in saying that even one hundred members attend upon the voting of the money: it is usually done at the close of wordy debates which have fatigued both the talkers and the listeners, and when both get off with all possible speed without imagining that the real business of their constituents is now to come on. In this matter, the late hours of the Parliament has been no inconsiderable prop to the Ministers; for even this Session could not have seen Mr. SPRING RICE obtain so quietly fifteen millions of money at one sitting, if he had been compelled to ask for it at mid-day instead of mid-night; and, therefore, considering how easily they got through the Session to what the country hoped, we are not surprised that the Ministers should express their gratitude to the "reformed House", even in the unmeasured language in which it is done.

In going through this production, it is not our intention to take the pamphleteer point by point, and examine all his subjects; because the task would demand such another pamphlet in bulk; but we have a serious quarrel with him upon one topic, namely, that which relates to trade and manufactures, and the committee thereon. On this matter, the remarks and assertions of the pamphleteer are so disingenuous, nay, so utterly false, that we shall be obliged to contradict him by counter statement, and this will take up the space that we have to spare upon such a work.

Speaking of Ireland, the pamphleteer says, "the measure passed both Houses by large majorities; *the country, as well as the Parliament admitted its necessity.* Its success has been the very highest of which a preventive measure is capable. It has succeeded, not only *without being abused*; but almost *without having been employed.*" Here would be matter enough to dwell on, if we had the room. In the first place the Bill, *as brought in*, was not passed; even this present House refusing its sanction to it, and one of the members nearest of kin to a minister that a man can be without actually being one, we mean the Lord Chief Baron of Scotland, the intimate and close friend and old associate and co-operator of the Whigs, expressing his total dissent from his friends upon the occasion, both because of the injustice and the impolicy of the Coercion Bill! And, as to the country, were there not petitions from all parts of it against the Bill? Did it not cost the Ministry almost all their popularity? Was not the King addressed from many parts to turn the Ministers out, on account of their procuring this bill to be passed? Then, again, the use that has been made of the Bill. Does the pamphleteer forget the complaints made by Mr. FINN and by Mr. RUTHVEN that the Bill has already been made the instrument for enforcing payments for tithes? Let him recollect himself, while we go to another point of his pamphlet.

In introducing the subject of Slavery, the pamphleteer (p. 12.) says that the "Ministers *boldly and wisely* determined to grapple with the

"question," &c., and then he gives a sketch of the main features of the Bill. But not a word about the 15,000,000*l.* that were at first proposed to be *lent* to the West Indians as compensation, and not one word of how the abolitionists worried and badgered the Ministers till, instead of *lending* fifteen they consented to *give* twenty millions. Not a word about the *seven* and the *twelve* years at first proposed by the Ministers as the term that slavery was yet to exist, and how they were tormented till they gave it up for a much shorter term of *apprenticeship*. And, after all, the matter ends in this, that the English Parliament has willed that the change shall be made, but it leaves it to the colonies themselves to say *how*. "The details," says this satisfied writer, "of the plan they have properly left to the local experience of the various colonial legislatures," p. 17. so that, it is not yet proved to be practicable. Any body can *scheme*, but it is the practice that puzzles; and, if the colonial legislatures find the scheme utterly impracticable, the scheme is good for nothing. They may not, to be sure, but it would be but modest of the Ministry to wait to see that, before it suffers the plaistering of this pamphleteer.

The writer begins his notice of "Trade" in page 45; and after endeavouring to show that there has been an increase in trade from 1832 to 1833 (which is in some measure possible without any calculations of a permanent increase being with reason deduced therefrom), he comes to speak of the Parliamentary Committee on manufactures and commerce, appointed in May last, and which did not terminate its labours till the middle of August. But, before we say a word more, we must insert the whole of this part of the Treasury pamphlet. It shows such malignity, carries so much the air of disappointment, that to those who were concerned in frustrating the evident intentions of the Government in this Committee, it ought to be a subject of great congratulation that they worked so effectually as they did. The paragraph is as follows:—

"Nor has Parliament been less active, or less zealous in its endeavours to ascertain the actual condition of the manufacturing and commercial interests, than in its efforts to improve them. A Committee was appointed for this purpose at the suggestion of the declaimers about distress, and a laborious and lengthy investigation into all the principal branches of our national industry has been carried on. The evidence has been laid before the public; and although no report, owing to the alleged want of time, has accompanied it, sufficient proof will be found in the testimony of the principal witnesses, of the sound and healthy condition of all the great interests which were inquired into. Indeed, the greatest of all, perhaps, consists in the absence of any report, which, it is understood, was mainly caused by those Members of the Committee who were the loudest in their complaints of the distressed condition of the country. Whilst those Members who entertained a different opinion of the condition of the industrial state of the country, were most anxious to give an exposition of the results to which inquiry led; those who demanded it, shrank from any Report, conscious, that if founded on the evidence, it could not support their own views, and were thus glad to shelter themselves under silence, from the exposure of the real truth.—This speaks for itself."—(p. 53-4.)

Whatever other alterations have been made in our manner of governing, whatever corruptions, jobbings, patronage, may have been put down—falsehood thrives still, at any rate, in as great rankness as in the most corrupt days of the government of PITT, PERCEVAL, or CASTLEREAGH; for surely never did tongue or pen promulgate anything farther from the truth than the facts put forward in the pas-

sage above-quoted. Verily the "Reform Ministry" is true to its kind wherever the force of the public has not "acted upon its purdence!" The spiteful mention of those who suggested the Committee here spoken of, the "*declaimers about distress*," shows at once that it was not with a good will that the Committee was granted; it shows a degree of anger that a triumphant minister and even the tool of a triumphant minister would not have the bad taste to display thus plainly. They are the ill-tempered expressions of mortified power, and are a suitable preface to what follows them.

Though no report has been made by the Committee, yet the evidence, says the pamphleteer, gives sufficient proof in the testimony of the *principal witnesses* "*of the sound and healthy condition of all the great interests which were inquired into!*" This passage will surprise some of the principal witnesses! And we believe that words more untrue were never uttered. But the remaining part of this passage is the most extraordinary. The pamphleteer is compelled to account for an absence of Report. He was here in a cleft-stick; he could not get out of it without blame to some one. The Committee *had* finished its examinations; and why not report? Ah! there came the rub! And in order to anticipate the public suspicion and to get through his job, he has recourse to open and unblushing misrepresentation of fact. He justly enough attributes the absence of any report to "those members of the Committee who had been loudest in their complaints of the distressed condition of the country," but here end at once his justice and his veracity. He describes the other members of the Committee as having been anxious to give an "exposition of the results to which the inquiry led," and those who demanded the committee as shrinking from it, BECAUSE they were conscious that a true report founded on the evidence would have exposed the fallacy of their assertions. He winds up by asserting that these latter were thus glad to shelter themselves under silence from an exposure of the truth!

Now, either this writer is grossly misinformed, and, every fact, therefore, that he asserts unsupported by other evidence, ought to be doubted; or, he is a party to the circumstances that he writes about, and is therefore responsible in himself, for what he here says, and consequently is a writer of premeditated falsehood, if (as we believe) the above be untrue. In short, he is either one of the Committee, or he is a hack employed to write this account.

We, too, have "understood" something about the transactions in this Committee; and, as we have understood, the reasons for there being no Report from it are as different from those given by this pamphleteer as night is different from day. Of course, we cannot disprove a bare statement of fact, by argument. It can only be done by positive denial coming from some one who has the means of knowing the contrary to be the case, and who will state it to be so. This (if we could procure it) might be "unparliamentary", for ought that we know; but we may state what we believe to have been the real reasons upon which the Committee acted; and, in doing this, if we are not *critically* correct, if we say *eleven* voted where *twelve* voted, and that *seven* voted where *six* voted, it does not affect the substantial

correctness of our version. We vouch for the correctness of the substance of our counter statement. The reasons, then, which really moved the Committee to make no Report are these:

That, the Chairman, Mr. POULETT THOMPSON (a minister), brought a report in his pocket on the day when the Committee met to deliberate on its Report; but that, on his reading it to the Committee, they found it so completely at variance with the evidence, that they objected to it; that, instead of reporting to the House that they had found from the most unquestionable testimony that the "great interests which they had inquired into," namely, the shipping trade, the cotton manufactures, and the Birmingham and Sheffield manufactures, were in a state of deeper distress than had ever before been known, and that they were, up to the latest period which the witnesses could speak to, getting worse; they found that, instead of reporting this which they had received in evidence, they should be reporting to the House that those interests were in a state of *soundness and health*!

That, seeing this proposed to them, some of the members who had been "loudest in complaints of the distressed condition of the country," being unpractised in the usages of Parliament, but being of plain and straightforward understanding and habits, expostulated with the Committee on the circumstance of coming to a report before it had seen or heard the evidence; that they stated their belief, that out of the 34 members of the Committee, not more than one half had been in attendance to hear the evidence; that the printed reports from the short-handwriter's notes which are supplied to members during the progress of the Committee, were then more than a fortnight in arrear; that in the evidence which they would contain, there was some of a character that deserved great attention, and that no member of the Committee ought in conscience to vote a Report without having at least *read* that evidence; that, therefore, it was better to send the minutes of evidence in its naked form than to preface it by a Report which should tend to mislead the House upon so grave a subject.

That, hereupon the Committee came to a vote by show of hands, when it happened that there were, for the Report, *eight*, and against it, *nine*. That the Chairman was more than disconcerted; he was incredulous, and insisted on putting it to the vote again by division, when there became, for the Report, *seven*, and against it, *ten*.

Hence the spite against the "*declaimers about distress*!" "Shrank from *any* report," did they? They shrank from reporting upon what they had not heard, and they believed those men who told them that, if they had heard all, they would *shrink* from sending such a report as the one proposed; and it is a little too hard for a "*Reform Minister*" to fall on thus "tooth and nail" upon a *Reform Committee* because it opens a new era, as it were, in Committee-workings; because it kicks at sending up to the House and out to the country the ready cut-and-dry representations which the minister ("Reform Minister") finds it convenient to promulgate!—"Tis hard!

But, in this question alone we find the sincerity of the "Reform Ministry." They brawl like Tories when any one now talks of distress; distress must not be named, or those, who name it are "declainers;" but, mark! this is not till they are *in office*, however, for before that, too much could not be said about it. "State of the nation" was everlastingly on their tongues' end; motion after motion was made for inquiry into the "State of the nation." If the nation had been a thing with only one body and one mind, the Whig talk about its "state" would have sunk it long ago in *hypocondria*, or some other disorder of imagination; but luckily it consists of such minute and numerous parts, each independent of the other, that, though every creature in the country was made to believe that great mischief prevailed somewhere, yet no one took it individually to heart so as to die of it. But, seriously, *why* should any ministry set their faces against the proof that the country is in a distressed state? If they have been long in power, there is *a* reason, a bad one, then, to be sure; but there is a reason. But why the Whigs—just come into power—should strive to hunt down those who speak of the distresses which they witness and prove to exist, is not to be referred to any honest motive. The fact is, that, when the Whigs get into place, they become, like Tories, fond of their seats, snug in their seats; avowed distress portends *some* change, and change of any kind is always disliked by a man who is snug. It does not necessarily disturb him; but it *may*, and the possibility is an uncertainty that makes ministers (whether "Reform" or not) amongst the most waspish of mankind, and hence the virulence of the attack on the "*declainers about distress*."

In page 102, the pamphleteer says: "that the present is a strong administration no one can doubt who looks at its overwhelming majorities;" and in page 108, he pretends that it is strong in *itself*; that it has had recourse to no junction of parties, saying—"In spite of the opposition, sometimes separate, but more frequently combined, of Tories and Radicals, there never, so far as the House of Commons is concerned, has been a stronger administration." Any man who has watched the proceedings of the House of Commons through this session must know that there is here contained a very gross historical falsehood; that the ministers have been on many occasions indebted to the Tories for keeping them in power, and that, the junction of Radicals and Tories has been rare indeed. It is to take a *wrong view* of parties to pretend what this pamphleteer has here written; for many a time would the Whigs have been turned out this session, had there not prevailed a fear as to *what would succeed them*. The Tories would not be tolerated by the country; the Tory leaders are too well known and are too unpopular; and the Radicals (we speak of those active leaders in Radicalism who have long professed themselves Radicals) have never yet so far possessed the confidence of the middle classes even, as to think of assuming power. *This is the strength of the Whigs*; this gave them their majorities, but these majorities they cannot long keep unless they become more Radical; that is, unless they will do those things which the people wish to see done.

Toryism, is a tottering, bigotted, obstinate and mistaken old man,

and may be easily opposed ; radicalism is a brawny, sturdy and wayward youth, for the most part right though rash, striding along in the straightforward but roughest path, bent on attaining his end, and though hitherto feared as much by his friends as by his enemies, still he must ultimately prevail, for he is right.

THE WEIRD SISTERS.

AN HOLY ALLIANCE GLEE.

Enter Three Witches.

1st Witch. To Munchengratz away, away ;
Sisters, tarry not I pray.

2nd Witch. We are ready bold and strong,
We've been waiting long, long, long.

3rd Witch. Follow, follow, follow me !
Soon at Munchengratz we'll be.

All. There, in lonely midnight revel,
We shall meet our friend the devil :
Nations shall be made to yield,
Constitutions, fly the field !

1st Witch. I'll be clad in verdant green ;

2nd Witch. I, in spotless white be seen ;

3rd Witch. Azure blue, for me, I ween.

All. Thus together, blue and white,
And the verdant green unite ;
Who shall bear their dazzling rays,
Let us, let us, sing their praise !

1st Witch. Sisters, sisters, mind the pot !
Let the broth be good and hot :
There goes in a quart or more
Of rebellious Poland's gore ;
And an infant Polish boy,
A Polish mother's only joy !

3rd Witch. There goes in a Frenchman's nose—
A Flemish burgomaster's toes.

2nd Witch. Italy shall something give—
There's the Pope's eye, as I live,
And a vile Tyrolean's hand,
That dar'd to wage 'gainst me a brand.

All. Stir them ! stir them ! up and down.
Alas ! alas ! poor Miggy's crown
Has tumbled in our boiling pot,
Let the broth be good and hot.
Sisters ! Mig with us shall dine,
He is truly of our line.

Sisters, sisters, raise the wand !
 Summon hither Ferdinand.
 With us too the Turk shall feast !
 He is not deserving least ;
 But as yet we will not eat,
 For mightier matters here we meet.
 Honour ! honour ! to our Nick,
 Make the hell-broth good and thick.

1st Witch. Lusatia must confess our sway,
 Thither let us haste away ;
 Things must shortly there be mended,
 And our darling Mig defended.

2nd Witch. As we go, we'll call at Spain,
 We are wanting there 'tis plain ;
 Curs'd freedom o'er the land is striding,
 And the haughty Dons dividing :
 We will check the sons of light,
 Drive them back to darkest night :
 Then shall Switzerland behold,
 We can tame her sons, tho' bold !

3rd Witch. When these matters are set right,
 We'll to Gaul direct our flight :
 The Gallie cock must cease to crow,
 Liberty, shall melt as snow !
 France shall prostrate lie again,
 Then ! we'll haste beyond the main ;

All. Yes ! beyond the main we'll fly
 Where the British Islands lie ;
 A thousand ships protect their coasts,
 And dauntless are their gallant hosts ;
 They're freemen too—but still must yield !
 The sisters swear to gain the field.
 E'en Scandinavia must be taught,
 To homage us in word and thought.

2nd Witch. Yes ! yes ! yes ! the world must bend,
 Liberty is near her end !

1st Witch. We are masters all around,
 Our power shall never know a bound.

3rd Witch. Sisters, sisters, all is well !
 I hear vile freedom's dying knell :
 Not a single spot on earth
 Again shall give the monster birth.

All. Let us hasten to the pot,
 For the broth is good and hot !
 Oh ! it is a noble dish !
 Good, as even kings could wish.
 Patriot's flesh is there in plenty,
 And of freemen's skulls just twenty ;
 We have ruby blood for wine,
 Sisters ! sisters ! haste to dine. [*Exeunt.*

W. L. G.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Benson Powlet, or the French in Moscow in 1812. 2 Vols. 8vo.
pp. 260. 1833.

The work before us is valuable, looking at it either as a record of some of the events of any extraordinary period in modern history, or as the fruits of a mind employed in observing and noting society and manners. Were we to criticise it as a novel, in some respects it would be found wanting, there is not sufficient interest excited in the fortunes of the hero, and this is occasioned by his never being properly introduced to the reader; there is a degree of indistinctness about him, that he never has a palpable existence in the mind's eye. The character of Miss Clifford is well delineated, there is feminine softness with a hallowing touch of intellect in her composition, that altogether makes her a very loveable being. The part of the work which we like best, is that where Napoleon is introduced. The skill with which some parts of his character are drawn, and the manner in which it is sustained by the dialogue he is made to utter, stamp that part of the book so much with the impress of reality, that it scarce has the appearance of fiction.

"A person, surrounded by officers, was seen leisurely descending the grand staircase, it was Bonaparte. He wore, as usual, a plain uniform of green cloth, and a pinched cocked hat. No ribbon or star decorated his breast: no gold lace or embroidery shewed the dexterity of a tailor. He seemed to be conscious that if he were really great, he required no external ornament to distinguish him; if he were not, all the jewels in the world could add nothing to his character.

"The moment he appeared, his eye swept the horizon, ran over the persons on the stair, and then sunk to the ground, in gloomy melancholy. He appeared dissatisfied, although it was evident that he strove to conceal his feelings. Standing on the lowest step, close to Mr. Powlet, he waved his hand: the music ceased, and his generals approached. Murat said something to him, in a low voice. He immediately shot a glance at Powlet from under his heavy eyebrows in an instant surveying him from head to foot, advanced a step, and unclouding his brow, said, with an air of affability—"You are an Englishman? I am happy to meet with you in these inhospitable regions. I respect the English, as individuals, though I hate them as a nation. It is their all-grasping policy that has brought me hither: but, if it had been carried to the extremity of Asia, I should have followed it!"

"Powlet's lips moved; it was evident he wished to speak.

"You wish to defend your countrymen, Mr. Powlet: you need not. To them the continent owes all the miseries of war; to them Moscow is indebted

for the ruin of its palaces ; and—and—it is of no use disguising it—to them I owe the disorganization of my army, and all my present perplexities.’

“Powlet was again going to speak.

“‘I understand you perfectly,’ continued Bonaparte. ‘You are not a military man, Mr. Powlet ; but you have shewn yourself more capable of leading an army than some whom I could mention. You, at least, are a man of courage—young, ardent, and generous. You would not have burnt your house to get rid of the rats ; you could not have sat still, like a superannuated old woman, till the flames caught your distaff. If you had been commander-in-chief on the glorious twenty-sixth of August, we should not have been now in Moscow ; for though we had succeeded in beating you that day, we could not have beaten you a second time ; our strength was too much reduced. You, on the contrary, would have received reinforcements ; and your troops, fighting in defence of their holy city, within view of its inhabitants and saints, would have been invincible : neither a retreat, nor, if you will, a defeat, would have had that baneful, withering effect on my army, which this barbarous conflagration has had. We might have lost the battle, but what did that signify ! our crown of laurels must have been thinly woven indeed, if, in a case of necessity, we could not spare a leaf out of it.’

“After a pause, he continued—‘Our extraordinary position has required a more than ordinary relaxation of discipline ; but the necessity has ceased, and our men are themselves again. I have taken measures for the re-establishment of order. Yesterday, gentlemen,’ said Bonaparte, turning to his generals, ‘I appointed marshal Mortier governor of this city, and Lesseps, our former consul at Petersburg, the head of a body of police, consisting of seventy-three persons, of whom forty have been selected from the most experienced and intelligent of the inhabitants. To-day I shall issue an order of the day, to which I request you to pay particular attention. No soldier shall appear out of his quarters without leave ; all the property that has not been destroyed shall be collected into warehouses, and equally distributed among the men : wine must be appropriated solely for the use of the hospitals ; every soldier found transgressing this order shall be punished on the spot. At the same time, you will inform all persons under your command, that our prospects are brightening. An immense quantity of provisions and clothing is on the road from Vilna and Smolensk ; Victor is bringing up reinforcements ; Oudinot is on the point of taking Petersburg ; and Riga is already in our possession.

“Addressing himself then to Powlet—‘You see, therefore, Russia is on the brink of annihilation ; and dearly indeed would she have had to pay for her adherence to your mercantile system, if I had not still felt compassion for her emperor. I would rather be called magnanimous than great ; for the great have been generally either tyrants or barbarians. I am still willing to conclude a peace, on terms the most advantageous to this country. If Russia cannot sip her tea without your sugar, she shall have it ; if she thinks a coat of English cloth superior to one of home made, let her wear it. Prohibitions, I now find, will not deter a nation from following its own inclinations ; and it is better that the public revenue should be increased, than that a parcel of revenue officers and smugglers should fatten on its spoils. As the discontented Polish provinces are only a burden to their possessors, Poland shall be consolidated into one kingdom. Such are the moderate terms I intend to propose. I am told that your friend, general Eavin, has great influence with the commander-in-chief ; you, therefore, have it in your power, Mr. Powlet, to negotiate a peace, which will be as beneficial to Russia, as it will be conducive to the future tranquillity of Europe. I need not mention, what honour and fame await you, if you succeed in reconciling two of the most powerful empires on earth.’

“Powlet was grateful for the honour intended him, but begged leave to suggest, that he himself was too humble and obscure an individual to be listened to in such affairs ; whilst he had no doubt his majesty would find hundreds in his army, who not only would be more graciously attended to, but who were more capable of conducting a negociation of so much importance.

“‘True,’ said Bonaparte ; ‘if my object were one that could be gained by open attack, I have thousands of brave fellows who would risk their lives in it ; but this is a service that requires some knowledge of the people ; of their modes of thinking and acting ; of their weak sides ; and of the best method of turning

every circumstance to our advantage. This knowledge, I understand, you possess; and as you are a man of education, and an Englishman, I am certain that I may depend upon your prudence and fidelity.'

"It is precisely because I am an Englishman, and, consequently, a stranger and a guest, that I should beg to decline interfering.'

"I do not intend to appoint you my plenipotentiary, Mr. Powlet. All that I should desire of you would be, merely to suggest to your friends the possibility of our listening to such terms as I have mentioned.'

"The suggestion would be useless, please your majesty; for I already know, through my friend, general Eavin, that no proposition of peace would be listened to.'

"No! the Russians not listen to terms of peace! it is impossible! You have misunderstood the general, Mr. Powlet,' said the emperor, with a sardonic smile. 'What! their army destroyed—their capital in ashes—their country in the hands of their enemy, and not listen to peace! why, what do they intend to do then?'

"To cut off your retreat!" replied Powlet.

"He spoke these words in as mild and humble a tone as he could assume; but scarcely had he uttered them, than Bonaparte started with surprise, his eyes sparkled, his brows were again knit, and stamping with his foot, he cried—'Are they fools or madmen? If they could not check our advance when their whole army was concentrated on one road, how can they prevent our retreat, when it is scattered along all the roads leading to Moscow, and occupies a circumference of more than a hundred miles? Is there a single point on which they can bring to bear even fifty thousand men? And are we such tyros in the art of war, that we will leave our communications unguarded? Cut off our retreat, indeed! The general who could not beat us when we were fainting from hunger, and exhausted with fatigue, is not likely even to look us in the face, when our strength is recruited, and our numbers are reinforced. The Russians cannot be so blind to their interest. I will know the truth, however. Send for Lauriston: he has lived amongst them, and says he knows them. He tells me, the peasants are groaning under their burdens, the nobility are discontented, and the subjugated nations are ripe for revolt. If this be true, let them look to themselves: they will have enough to do, without troubling themselves with our retreat. It was Lauriston who persuaded me to undertake this expedition; it is he, therefore, who ought to be answerable for its success. He shall go to Cootoozof immediately.'

The writer is evidently an unpractised author. Many of his sentences are harsh, and grate upon the ear very disagreeably, and some of his sentences are too long to be either eloquent or correct. Though it has those faults, there is a vigour and freshness in it not often found in works of fiction, and it has this good quality, that the reader must gain from it interesting information as well as amusement.

*Prize List of the Edinburgh Academy, Thursday
1st August 1833.*

The proof that industry and talent being to be found in a school which we are by no means inclined to look favourably upon. It was established some nine years ago by what is called the upper classes, for the exclusive education of their progeny, their being sent to the High school involving the possibility of forming low friendships, and

consequently losing cast ; but be this as it may if the establishment continue to produce such fruit as we have here before us, that will go some way towards pacifying our wrath against the Academy, although it was established by men who were afraid of their children being contaminated by herding with those of their fellow townsmen. We almost feel tempted to give a specimen of the poetry of Master W. Robinson, but our space forbids.

The National Standard of Literature, Science, Music, Theatricals, and the Fine Arts ; Vol. II. parts I. and II. 4to. 1833.

This is a work deserving of great encouragement. It is of the utmost importance in the literary world that the publications which are produced, should become known extensively and speedily, and as extensively as possible. The smaller the sum required from the public to effect this the better chance is ; that it will be done. This work is only half the price of the *Athenæum* which in a great measure gained its immense sale by reducing its price one half. But almost all the booksellers and a considerable portion of the public, think that the cheap works interfere with the patronage formerly devoted to the more important ; we think this an idle charge, the really good cheap works such as the one now before us, create an appetite which grows by what it feeds on. The Book Trade has certainly grown worse since cheap publications have become so numerous, but he is blind indeed who cannot see other and more active causes which have effected this.

Political and other Poems, by Charles Cole, a London Mechanic.

No. 1. (To be continued Monthly.) Pamphlet. 1833.

We would call the attention of our readers to this little work ; it is worthy of their encouragement. Lest from the lowness of the price, two-pence, they should class it among the ephemeral trash with which the press so often teems, we would inform them that this small " Garland " of political songs is both good and cheap. There is an elegance and force of expression in these poems, that would do honor to writers of any station in life, but when we see that the author of these pieces

is a mechanic, the classic turn of his lines is truly astonishing. Let Mr. Cole cultivate his poetical genius, and his name may be as well known to his countrymen, as that of Alcæus who eulogized the overthrowers of tyranny, to the Athenians. We insert the introductory poem as a specimen of the whole :—

LOVE OF LIBERTY.

A Boy—I dreamed of Liberty,

A Youth—I said “but am I free?”

A Man—I felt that Slavery

Had bound me in her chain :—

But, yet, the dream which, when a boy,

Was wont my musings to employ,

Fast rolling years could not destroy,

With all their grief and pain.

No ! still the thought that mocks control,

Whose only rest is Freedom’s goal,

Would, mantling, rise within my soul

Till every vein ran fire !

My spirit in a spell was bound—

The spell of an inchanting sound,

Which bad me wake—and breathe around

The murmurs of the Lyre.

That spell is on my spirit still :

Yes ! lovely Freedom ! yes ! I will

The task by Heav’n assigned fulfil—

And wake the Lyre for thee !

The dream of boyhood still is bright,

And bursting through oppression’s night,

I see a radiant form of light—

Celestial Liberty !

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

BOOKS FORTHCOMING.

Trevelyan, by the author of *Marriage in High Life*.

Lieutenant Breton's Narrative of his recent Excursions in New South Wales, Wrethren, Australia, and Van Dieman's Land.

Naval Adventures during Thirty-five years' Service by Lieutenant Bowers, R.N.

Twenty Minutes' Advice on the eyes, and the means of preserving the Sight.

Kidd's Picturesque Companion to Tunbridge Wells, Eastbourn, St. Leonard's, and Hastings, with original designs by G. W. Bonner.

Lectures on Christian Ethics ; or, Moral Philosophy on the principles of Divine Revelation, &c., delivered by the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw, D. D.

Dictionary of the Terms employed by the French in Anatomy, Chemistry, Physiology, &c. &c., by Dr. Shirley Palmer.

A new Work by Miss Montgomery, author of " Lights and Shadows of German Life.

Compendium of Osteology, with an Account of an improved Method of preparing Bones for Osteological Purposes. By Dr. George Witt.

British Tariff for 1833-4, with the Consolidation of the Laws of the Customs just enacted, by Robert Ellis, Esq.

NEW BOOKS.

Galt's Autobiography. 8vo.

Leigh's Continental Companion.

The Laws relating to the Poor, being a Supplement to Bott and Nolon's Treatises. By T. T. Pratt, 8vo.

Prize List of the Edinburgh Academy. 8vo. sewed.

Benson Powlet, or the French in Moscow in 1812. 2 vols. 8vo.

Political and other Poems. By a Mechanic. Pamphlet.

THE THEATRE.

ALL the winter theatres open about the first of the present month, and from the published lists of the companies, much first rate talent seems to be employed at the minor establishments. Madame VESTRIS has secured LITTON and KEELEY, while REEVE occupies his old quarters at the Adelphi; so that the three best low comedians of the day are absent from the patent houses, of the strength of which in other departments we have no means of judging, as, at the time of writing this, we have seen no lists of their companies.—We believe opera is to be the main feature of the approaching season at Drury Lane, where it is said Gustave is already in preparation. Its success in Paris warrants its production here, though *Ali Baba*, which is at this time the most popular piece in the French capital, has been declined on account of the public being too familiar with the story. This we conceive a silly motive for abandoning the design of bringing out the opera, to which, if the music be attractive, the story can be of no consequence. Mr. BUNN's management will be looked to with interest at least, if it be only on account of the novel situation in which he stands as double lessee of both the patent houses.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

Mr. MORRIS, at the close of the season, has made a most fortunate hit by the introduction of Miss ELIZA PATON to the stage, who, though for some time known and admired as a concert singer, never, till lately, submitted her talents to the test of a theatrical audience. Her style reminds us much of Mrs. WOOD, to whom we think she will in a short time rank only second as a vocalist. Though wholly without experience of the stage, she acts with propriety, and there is nothing awkward in her deportment or injudicious in her delivery. As the Haymarket does not profess to be a musical theatre, we presume we must not quarrel with Mr. MORRIS for the general deficiencies which have characterised the production of operas at his establishment. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, and though supported (as far as a foil acts as a support) by Mr. ANDERSON, her performances have every evening been received with rapturous applause by very crowded audiences. We believe that the Haymarket closes in the course of the present month, and we are happy to find that the profits of the latter have more than recovered the losses of the earlier part of it.

THE VICTORIA THEATRE.

There has been no novelty produced at this house of much consequence; a piece called "*Mary Queen of Scots*" was brought out, which afforded the corps dramatique an opportunity of speaking bad Scotch; it has evidently been written for a Scottish audience, abounding with patriotic clap-traps. We experienced a treat in witnessing Mr. WARD's personification of Othello, without seriously imitating KEAN, there is enough in his delineation of the character to remind us much of that actor; but we are compelled to say that it is more in the outward and grosser developement of the character than in those single words, actions and expressions of the countenance which required the spectator to be well acquainted with the readings of humanity to discover and appreciate, that the likeness of KEAN holds. We have to express our commendation of the instrumental performance at this theatre, the manner in which some of the most admired overtures are executed, entitles the performers to great praise; some two or three evenings ago the overture to *Fra Davalio* was gone through in fine style, and encored to the great annoyance of the gods to whom it is a sad bore.

THE MARKETS.

CORN MARKET, MARK LANE, September 27.

BRITISH GRAIN (PER QUARTER).

WHEAT, Essex and Kent..	Red 50 to 52 extra	56 ..	White	54 to 60
Suffolk & Norfolk	—	53 to 56 ..	— ..	55 61
West Country	—	54 57 ..	— ..	56 60
Northumberland & Scotch ..	—	50. 54 ..	— ..	54 57
Irish	—	44 50 ..	— ..	45 50
RYE				32 35
BUCKWHEAT				— —
BARLEY, Malting, fine nominal				27 31
Stained	23 to 26 ..		Distilling	25 27
Grinding				— —
MALT, Brown, Old, 38	New 54 58 ..		Suffolk & Norfolk pale ..	58 60
Stained	44 50 ..		Ware	54 64
BEANS, Tick	New 30 32 ..		Old	33 35
Harrow and Small	— 34 37 ..		— ..	37 42
PEAS, Boiling, New	44 47 ..		Fine	44 —
Maple	38 40 ..		Hog and Grey	33 36
OATS, English Feed	18 20 ..		Short small	17 20
Do. Polands				19 21
Scotch common	— — ..		Berwick	— —
Do. Potatoe				24 25
Irish Feed	17 18 ..		Black	17 6 to 18 0
Do. Potatoe				19 21
FLOUR, Town-made and first Country marks			(per sack)	50 52
Norfolk and Suffolk				40 45
Stockton and Yorkshire				36 40
Irish				40 42
OATMEAL, Irish			(per ton)	£9 to £11
BRAN, at the Mills			(per 16 bushels)	7s. 0d. to 8s.
Wheaten Bread, from 8½d. to 9d. ; Household ditto, 6½d. to 7d., per 4 lbs. Loaf.				

PRICE OF STOCKS, SEPTEMBER 27.

3 per Cent. Consols	88½	Long Annuities	—
3 per Cent. Consols for Account, 88½ to 0		India Stock	—
3 per Cent. Reduced	—	Bank Stock	— to —
3½ per Cent. Reduced	— to 0	Exchequer Bills	44s. to —s.
3½ per Cent. New	96 to 0	India Bonds	29s. to —s.
4 per Cent.	— to 0		